

TeleVISIONS

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magazine

Video Teaching Learning Video

Five years in the field:
12 contributors
share the
experience

Starting on page 6



Photo montage: Maurice Jacobsen

When *TV Guide* sells 20 million weekly copies, *Sesame Street* sews up as many international markets as Coca-Cola, *Kojak* gets top ratings, Mobil Oil underwrites classic drama and the *Ascent of Man*, why should *TeleVISIONS* carry articles about a handful of improvised, almost impoverished video experiments involving a handful, rather than millions of teachers and students?

The full answer would take a description of the last two month's editing process. Rather, we will share our conclusions.

We see a vital need to chart developmental tendencies of education under conditions of new and changing technologies. Broadcast television has been the great hope for "cost-effective" education—and the hoopla and promotion involved with programs like the *Ascent of Man* and *Sesame Street* come from the collapse of the economy and the failure of the schools to teach basic skills or hold the allegiance of their students.

The smaller programs described in our teaching and learning supplement come out of more positive forces in our society, the demands that people are making to define their own lives and to see behind the scenes.

These small projects are propelled by rejecting the old myths of creativity and

genius, the mystery of production—all of which are laced with contempt for amateurs and a veneer of professional arrogance created by the educational institutions to hide their own inadequacies.

We have chosen to probe new approaches to learning and teaching with video, approaches which share a respect for direct individual experience and the primacy of seeing what's not in the picture as well as what's on the screen.

We're describing a small tree, instead of the rotting hulk, with hopes that these saplings can take root and flourish.

For there is great danger that educational television, even teaching video and media awareness, can fall into the pit of dormant educational fads. As Peter Haratonik, co-director of Center for Understanding Media, has pointed out, the excitement of some 1960s educators for the open-classroom movement has resulted only in a conservative backlash in many of the same circles during the 70s.

All too often TV in the classroom has merely been an expedient way of replacing the all-wise adult figure that has dominated education. Nancy Leake, educational TV supervisor for the Tulsa Public Schools sometimes thinks that perhaps the best use of the TV set in the classroom is to give children a repair manual and let them take the machines apart.

She goes on to argue that there might be other futures for TV in support of active learning—enhancing individualized instruction with discs, opening up broadcast and cable with small-format production, and expanding training and self-understanding with live process.

Many educators, in fact, have come to realize that they must consolidate their media-teaching experiences into a weapon for changing the structure of education. Haratonik considers the immediate need for teachers and video practitioners sent into the schools to determine how the special qualities of the medium can accomplish specific learning goals—not just to make curriculum more exciting. One of these specific goals, in fact, is to understand the medium itself.

Our method of unearthing these experiences has been scattershot. We sent out a letter to members of the *TeleVISIONS* Network, to our subscribers in educational work, and to our own personal (and incomplete) list of school media workers asking for articles on teaching video, video use in the classroom, case studies, curricula, and any conclusions about the last five years.

Our post office box was jammed with responses—far too much to print. Letter and project description arrived, one after another, with enthusiasm and intense excitement.

Many of these video success stories begin with the taping of school plays, football games and math lessons. Before they knew it, the kids were shooting their teachers, administrators, neighbors. Homegrown video is born with original titles like "No No Newton" (from Oshkosh, Wis.) The thing takes off and everyone is having a great, or at least better time.

The common flaw with these project descriptions is the lack of useful evaluation. The final curtain closes on active kids and a smiling educator happy to reap the benefits of a phantomlike phenomena known as "increased motivation."

Though this issue falls short of our own goals, we have selected project descriptions which are the most detailed, useable, and replicable—many from video practitioners who have set up their own structures to teach video. The selection of articles is designed to show that the introduction of video into the teaching/learning process requires some fundamental changes in the way teaching itself should be viewed.

And, since the items included are representative, not comprehensive, we hope they will open a fuller dialogue inside and outside the communities interested in the nexus of video, teaching, and learning.

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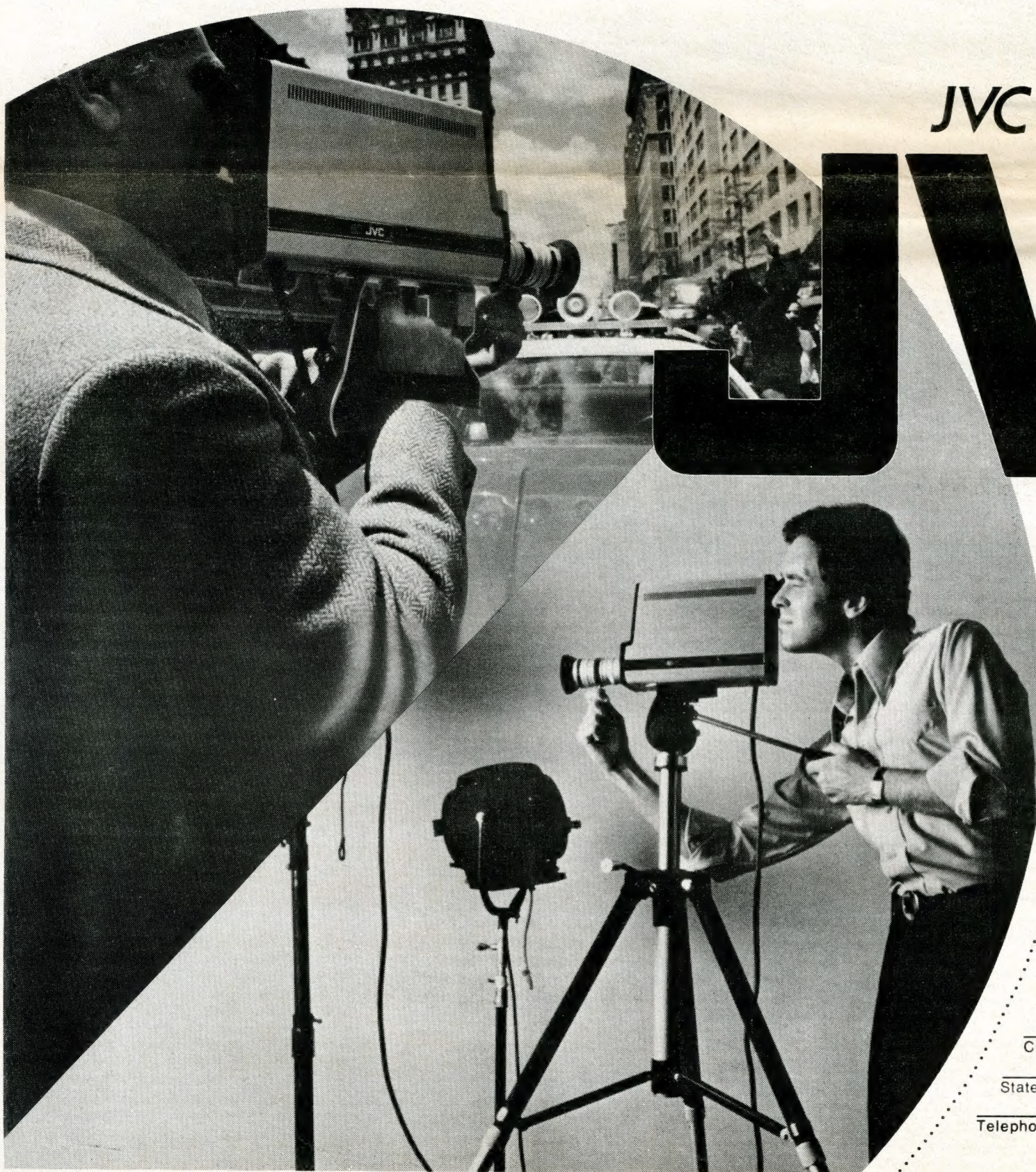
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The TeleVISIONS Network

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Editor's note

Every two months is a long time between letters among friends; that's the way we feel about every issue of this magazine. There's always so much to say, where do you start? We decided to share with you many of the ideas and fantasies we've come up with in our staff brainstorming sessions. This page is our collective vision at present—subject, as always, to change.

These content projections are easily the most exciting and fun part of running a magazine. The worst has got to be business, circulation, and fund-raising, hyping and hoping—all the things necessary to transform our vision into reality.

The TeleVISIONS Network

As Eugene Debs counselled: Don't rise out of the masses, rise with them—which is another way of saying that we want TeleVISIONS Magazine to reflect the people involved in the media movement from which the concept sprang. Our way of doing this is to create a network of people around the country who are willing and interested in making this publication a forum for news, ideas, opinions, experiences. At present there are some 60 members of the network who receive special notice of what's going on with the future of the magazine, as well as providing their own input. Network members also help with fund-raising, distribution, event coverage—whatever they're willing to do. We think our Network makes TeleVISIONS unique—and guarantees that we'll stay honest. If you'd like to join us, just drop a note and you'll be enlisted.

526th line

is our information hot-line...an early warning system...the spot for scoops, gossip, tricks, and trends served up as food for thought, and maybe action.

TV Lifestyles

will be a page-long feature on people who live with, around, under, or through the ubiquitous TV tube...good and bad. We will run longer, first-person testimonials (like Sherwood Kiraly's piece in the last issue), as well as little pictures and tidbits. Your tips and suggestions here are vital—since those of us in video bondage have the most to share (hide?).

Hardware supplement

The problem that seems to unite our wierd, diverse set of subscribers is hardware, so we will launch an every-issue feature on the major video components with up-to-date system information on cameras, color hardware, lighting, editing, portable systems, time-base correctors, modifications, repair and maintenance, sound, monitors, multiple-camera systems, colorizers and synthesizers.

News from the Videosphere

What other magazine has a network of correspondents and activists around the world reporting on the latest news in 10 different fields of telecommunications? Where else can you read about the news that you are making? How can you better keep track of the issues and controversies in Columbus, Ind., Austin, Tex., Eugene, Ore., et. al.—as well as the old familiars like LAX, DC, NYC, SF, etc.? It's just an information bargain, there's no two ways about it. You can't be for starvation.

Media resource guide

Every month you will receive the TeleVISIONS Media Guide—a twelfth of the country listed: groups, individuals, model projects, regional problems, and resources. This most-requested feature will require the assistance of local coordinators who we will work with to create an information junkie's ultimate fantasy—the perfect list.

Contributors

Henry Luce would chuckle if he saw our budget, but—believe it or not—TeleVISIONS is produced by a dedicated (insane?) staff with lotsa help from our friends. If you have a contribution—stories, letters, photographs, reviews, cartoons—don't hesitate to send it in. We can't guarantee that every item will make it, but we do a fair job of working with contributors—both professional and non-professionals. Access is our by-word, pressure our bane.

But unless there is a guiding concept to hold it all together, the depression can easily set in somewhere between the file cards and the subscription labels.

Sometime in the future (early 1976, we hope) TeleVISIONS Magazine will undergo a major expansion. We will publish a monthly twice our current size with many more regular features, an improved design format, broader circulation, and a larger staff. We will move the central office to Los Angeles, maintaining bureaus in Washington, New York and perhaps other cities, too.

Our national expansion will make the ideas listed below feasible on a grander scale—but only if we are able to raise ad revenue and the number of paid subscribers dramatically. This requires a full-time business and promotion staff, which we currently lack. Our planning, consequently, must be tentative.

The basis of TeleVISIONS Magazine is a strong relationship with the doers in the media world—you who read the mag and are its reason for being. By sharing our preliminary concepts we risk falling on our collective face, as well as having our great story ideas stolen before we have time to print them. But it's worth it to stimulate your visions.

The case in point is the current issue on teaching video. We began with several modest ideas, some of which appear in print, others which fell through. But in the process of soliciting ideas from members of our network and the people we knew working in the field, we have wound up with a special report that is quite remarkable. There was a kind of extraordinary chemistry in working with enthusiastic contributors who have much to share.

You are invited to join us on this great and (some say) insane experiment. We think it's a good one.

Coming attractions

The Emerging National Communications Policy, by Herbert I. Schiller
Adult Education in Appalachia, by Ted Carpenter

Gays in the Media—a comprehensive report on broadcast, video, and gay consciousness.

News From the Circular File—TeleVISIONS famous media bibliography.

New Boss at NCTA. An interview with Robert Schmidt.

Mobile Telephones: Ma Bell's latest hustle.

The Situation Comedy: from the 50's to the 70's.

A Primer for Independent Video Contract Negotiations

Corporate Underwriting of Public Broadcasting—a storm's a-brewing
Documentary video: history, style, and ethics.

Cable Arts Foundation: towards regular arts programming

video/the state/video/performance/video/politics/video/organ

This issue's special report on Video/Teaching/Video/Learning is a trial balloon for a regular, supplement-sized report on an area of compelling interest in the television world. We have brainstormed up the following categories and some thoughts about areas of interest. Each supplement—like this education issue you're reading—would include staff-generated articles and features, but would also serve a much-needed focus for what you're doing in the field—article access is a priority for these supplements. Here are our top candidates for in-depth treatment. Let us know what you think.

Video and...the buck: The cost of video production—which mode is right?...the question of quality...owning vs. renting hardware...organizational considerations...institutional vs. independent production...where are the hardware coops?

Video and...unions: Hollywood union history...non-union production...amateurs and public access...A-V professionals: why they're unorganized...new media unions...film to tape—a case study of technological impact.

Video and...the future: A report on the technology of TV's future: fibre optics (is cable obsolete?)...two-way (approaching reality?)...home video (discs, wall screens, high resolution, pay-TV)...a camera in your pocket...how they see it—broadcasters, cable operators, home video promoters, regulators...1984—how soon?

Video and...the state: Police and law enforcement use of video...video in the prisons...surveillance...federal funding of audiovisuals...local TV stations cooperation with police departments...video and the LEAA.

Video and...performance: Video as a rehearsal tool...theatre use of live and taped video...the dance...holo-

grams...conceptual video work...dance therapy...your performance fantasies.

Video and...political action: electoral politics, video and cable TV...the presidential candidates' views on media...local community organizing—some case studies...political effect of access...cable TV as a local issue.

Video and...the organism: Biofeedback, meditation, alpha monitoring, therapy, erotic video.

Video and...libraries: A round-up of the progress in the last years...the LSCA, a brief history...community information centers...becoming the city headend...library competition for hardware grants...

Video and...music: Rock performance and video...how to improve sound on small format video...whether simulcasting...videotapes with musicians, a resource guide.

Video and...the image: Are artists working with the video image changing the face of the art world?...Seeing ourselves to change ourselves, self-image in training and therapy...Video vs. film, do taped sitcoms and ENG preview the end of Eastmancolor and Panavision?

Video and...documentation: court recording, video depositions, architecture, real estate, community struggles, marches, dance labonotation.

Video and health: the paraprofessional mediaperson...what about two-way...telemedicine round-up...the activated patient...rural health delivery.

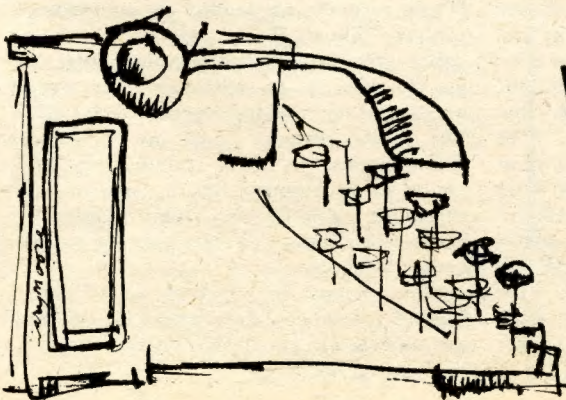
Video and...training: replacing lecture and print with the tube...industrial, hospital, and school uses...in-service for professionals...sales and the confidence men...alternative community-based projects.

video/unions/video/the buck/video/the future/video/health/

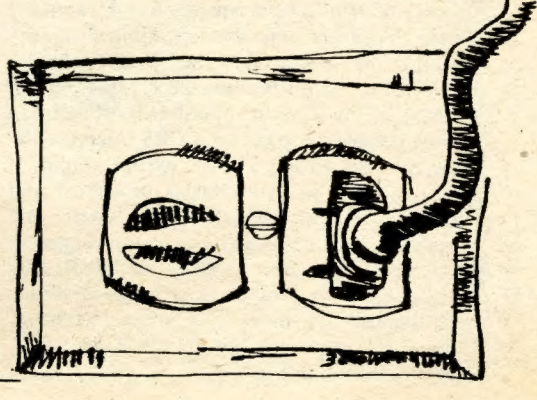
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WRITE IN PLUG IN



Cyclops: man with one eye in the land of the blind

By William Severini Kowinski

Every other Sunday on the television page of the *New York Times* Arts and Leisure section, there is a column signed by a creature that used to call itself Cyclops. There in one found phrases like "...Cosell, who wears his ego like a cow-catcher on the locomotive of his mouth and roars through our ears scorching our brains," or "After two weeks of the wholesome new TV season, I feel as though I've been locked inside a gigantic hot fudge sundae with my mouth wired open." Adventuresome or otherwise literarily inclined readers may have moved from there to the Sunday Book Review section of that same newspaper, where, generally on the back page (where almost everyone actually starts reading, having briefly checked out page one to see who's ipso facto-guaranteed bankable book has been puffed or slaughtered) they may from time to time find a column by John Leonard, former editor of the Book Review. It seemed to be laced with the same sort of scuzzling wit. Some coincidence.

In the September 21 issue of the *Times*, the one-eyed mask was dropped to reveal that John Leonard is Cyclops. He has left his post as Book Review editor to become something called the *Times* chief cultural correspondent.

"I became a TV reviewer by accident," Leonard says. When he switched his book reviewing from *Life* magazine to the *New York Times* in 1969 (when *Life* was still alive) his editor at *Life* wanted (a) to keep Leonard's writing in the magazine and (b) the services of a television columnist. Enter the famous formula, a plus b equals Cyclops. (Actually, Leonard wrote under his own name for a few years, until he became editor of the Sunday Book Review. "Life" still occasionally receives letters thanking the magazine for getting rid of me in favor of Cyclops," Leonard wrote in 1972. "or demanding my return and the firing of Cyclops. So much for a distinctive prose style.") From *Life* to *Newsweek* and now biweekly in the Sunday *Times*, Cyclops fights a never-ending battle with *Rhoda*, *Kojak*, and *Apple's Way*, keeping one wise eye on the similarly unocular tube and the other, presumably, on the road.

Why does a man who not only has a secure niche in the land of letters but a certain dominance there want to jump the babbling brook of denial into televisionland? Because "being powerless is liberating," Cyclops says. "You can say what you want about the play and the actors; it won't close and they won't be fired, on your account. By the time your

Cyclops harbors suspicions of how brittle our culture may be

comment appears in print, the object of it has vanished. Millions of people saw exactly what you saw, have already made up—or short-sheeted—their minds about it, and told Mr. Nielson." Also "You are being paid to watch television, which means that you don't have to apologize for doing what all your friends do secretly and feel guilty about." Spoken like a true liberated literary elitist.

So why should we, the great unvarnished, read the pithy observations of this word-wincing vaudevillian? It's not because Mr. Cyclops is always right. "Colombo is going to wear thin as a routine," he writes. "The detective who seems stupid but is actually smart is funny only the first time around." Right. So much for the predictions of 1971...But it isn't because he's a fool, either. Recently, his columns about H.R. Haldeman being generously paid for a CBS interview (he saw nothing wrong with it, except stupidity, comparing it to print media practices) and money hassles between TV stars and executives (he defended the stars, suggested salaries based on how royalties are handled in the book biz) have made singular good sense. Significantly, in these and other instances, Leonard's experience outside television is the illuminating element.

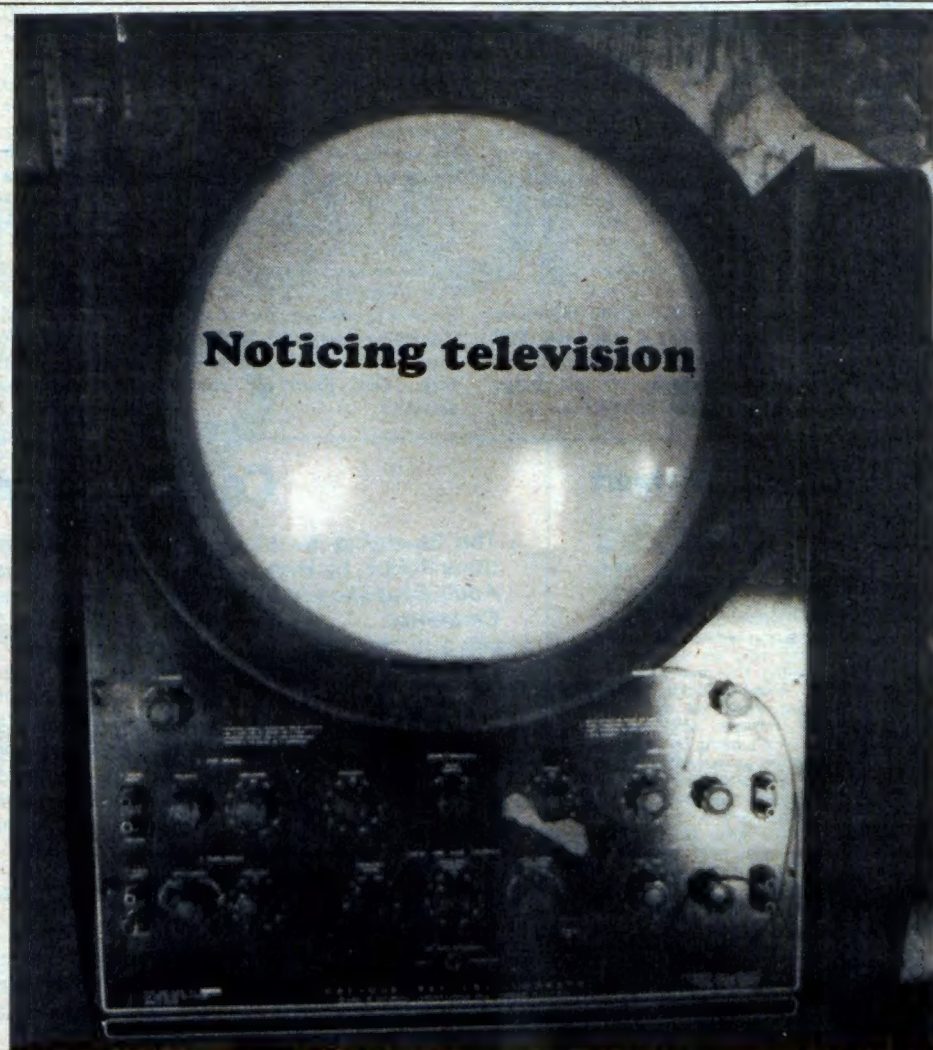


photo by G. Wurzburg

Cyclops's stylish prose has many delights. Often, his wit is its own reward, as in his observation that the erstwhile anchors of *ABC News*, Harry Reasoner and Howard K. Smith "...look like a pair of defeated congressmen..." or that Walter Cronkite of CBS "comes on like a combination of God and Willy Loman, selling disaster with a shoeshine and a jowl." Other times, when we as readers/viewers feel most helpless against the deadening insanity of some shows, his good style is our revenge against bad TV. Some of these inoculations against ennui come in small-dose one liners, viz. "Mike Douglas is Dinah Shore in drag." Others are antidotes sufficient to revel in, as this 1972 description of *Let's Make A Deal*: "Some weirdo prowls up and down the aisles, waving hundred-dollar bills, asking members of the studio audience whether they've got a whale tooth or Linda Kasabian's autograph or Spanish fly. If they do have it, they can either keep the cash or opt for the unseen. The unseen—a Polaris submarine. Dean Martin's bladder, 34 years on the jungleboat at Disneyland, capital punishment—sits behind a curtain. Zowie."

But what sets Cyclops irredeemably apart from other tube reviewers, and makes him worth reading, is his exploration of moral

In his more recent *Times* columns, he has scaled down the tour de force quotations from Sartre, Ezra Pound and Wallace Stevens, to deal more directly with television as experiences of contemporary culture. He thinks the medium, even as it is now used, is strangely important, and he tries to define how, even if those attempts seem to sneak in with the passion and the patter. "Television is now our only way of talking to each other about who we think we are," he writes, in a column about the Academy Awards marquee "Let's Hear It For Vulgarly." In a piece on TV news reporters as superstars, he slides in this mordant claim: "They are paid to be more than messengers; their celebrity is conferred on them because they are our stand-ins for life as it is botched outside our livingrooms." His view of the import of television was most clearly expressed in the last line of a column published this July: "The networks are our substitute for culture."

It is a heavy premise for a literary person to make, one who is aware of how important the systems of ideas transmitted by books, humanized and absorbed in lengthy letters, serious conversations and lively journalism once were to the care and feeding of previous cultures. Nowadays, it's true: West coast is linked to East principally by Johnny Carson and Tom Snyder. Layers of our culture are defined by who loves Lucy and who gets off on Uncola commercials. Some people relate better to characters on *General Hospital* than to their spouses or children. If you can't be your own best friend, there's always Merv Griffin.

Cyclops knows this. He is intimating the terrible suspicion of how brittle our culture may really be, made up of mass merchandized illusions with plenty of sheen and no guts. When he praises *Lucas Tanner*, it's not because "David Hartman plays the part of an ice cream cone with dimples" but because a serious, idealistic teacher is a good role-myth for his children to see. When, a few years ago, he devoted several columns to praising Dick Cavett, it was because "Cavett's dignity enhances our own. I hope he survives many seasons of our discontent, because then he will be helping us to survive them as well." When recently he lauded a non-network special, "Three Women Alone," for being "about real people and emotions that TV usually ignores or trivializes," it wasn't because (as he wrote in his controversial *All In The Family* review) "...of my ideological delinquencies, my toilet training, my SAT scores, my Higher Seriousness or my chromatic complexion," but because he knows television is a vital factor in our lives—and he cares.

Note: A selection of Leonard's life columns are published in his book: *This Pen for Hire*, by Doubleday.



But sitting in this conference room seven stories above Madison Avenue he is on the receiving end of the same public relations machinery as Betty Tate Cooper of the *Yuma Daily Sun*, or Dick Kline of the *Des Moines Sunday Register*, and a very impressive piece of machinery it is.

As the minions who run this public relations mill are most surely reminded each day, the business of the networks is not to deliver a program to an audience, but is to deliver an audience to a sponsor. The larger

Maurice Jacobsen is an executive editor of *TeleVISIONS*. William Kowinski is a freelance journalist, playwright and fictionist living in Cambridge, where he spends much time waiting for the tooth-fairy to finally arrive.

The ABCs of TV criticism

Paid to care about TV's new season

By Maurice Jacobsen

Watching a Sony at the other end of a long conference table in a window-less American Broadcasting Company meeting room, Marvin Kitman leans forward with a quizzical look in his eyes. "You know I don't like to review these shows before they go on the air. It kind of takes the fun out of it for people watching at home." No wonder, Kitman, television critic for Long Island's *Newsday* just finished looking at four hours of the new offerings conjured up by ABC. And for the most part they weren't very good.

The preview was presided over by Vic Gedaliah, one of ABC's public relations people who appeared at proper intervals to change the video cassettes. The atmosphere was embarrassingly comparable to a young filmmaker tentatively hoping for approval from a senior critic at a private screening and making uncomfortable small talk when it doesn't come. Only in this case the end results were produced on budgets of over \$250,000 and were going to be given a guaranteed audience of more people than saw *Gone With the Wind* when the epic film had its first theatre run.

"I don't think it'll work," he says looking at a new situation comedy *On the Rocks*. "They're trying to make a funny show about some poor miserable losers locked in jail. The show is based on something they did on the BBC. If they were smart they would have just imported the original, it's probably a whole lot better."

For Kitman the day started optimistically enough with a show called *Welcome Back Kotter*, a sit-com about your basic New Yorker. Gedaliah probably pulled this one out of his hat first to put the critic in a good frame of mind. The half-hour produced by the same people who created *Chico and the Man* is a story about a street kid who, after college, returns to teach at his old high school. It's a show that Kitman could easily relate to as the school was set in the same neighborhood where he grew up. "You know most families take their kids out of the city to get an education. Not mine, they brought me to Brooklyn to get educated."

Coming from a background of writing for the now-defunct New York publication *Monocle*, a magazine of satire, commentary and analysis, he's been *Newsday's* television critic for almost five years. He's the media critic's answer to Art Buchwald.

the audience the larger the advertising revenue. So, needless to say the networks want all the publicity they can muster and the television writers and critics from around the country are a prime source.

There are about 80 major newspaper writers the networks refer to as "the TV press," but perhaps less than half devote the better part of their week to writing columns, opinion pieces or investigative reports on the broadcast industry. Gary Deeb, TV critic of the *Chicago Tribune* tells of one veteran in charge of the TV section for a paper in Baltimore who was quoted in a recent feature story as saying he "never went in much for criticism," stating that his primary function was to let viewers know what was on TV that night and to let them decide for themselves whether they liked it.

John O'Connor television critic for the New York Times does not speak kindly of the majority of his colleagues feeling there is a "low state-of-the-art" in television criticism. "Critics should stay removed, they shouldn't let themselves get caught up in the glamour of the business. Many are nervous about talking with stars and will accept just about anything they are told without challenging the idea."

O'Connor doesn't take part in the twice yearly junkies which all three networks stage. But, for a television writer from middle America whose job is to fill in the spaces around the ads and program listings in the Sunday TV Supplement, a chance for a free-ride to Los Angeles is irresistible.

Once on the coast the writers are given the royal treatment, wine and dined, and given a chance to meet the stars and program executives. At NBC everyone goes at once. But CBS breaks the groups down, taking small batches to the coast over a period of time. According to Bill Greeley, one of the four TV writer/critics at the New York office of *Variety*, they do that in order to "keep the rotten apples away from the bunch. They don't want people like Gary Deeb asking embarrassing questions in front of a group of gentle people from the Midwest. What they try to do is to get all the trouble makers together at one time."

From the networks point of view one of those trouble makers is Les Brown, author of *The Business Behind the Box*, former *Variety* staffer, and now television correspondent for the *New York Times*. At the *Times* they make a clear distinction between reporting on the activities of the broadcast industry and reporting on program content. "I'm responsible for what comes out of the box, Les is responsible for what goes into it," is the way O'Connor puts it.

But this distinction is not the case everywhere and is one of the reasons why the trade press such as *Broadcasting*, and *Variety* have a special kind of relationship with the networks. TV writers outside the major markets of New York, Chicago and L.A. rely on these publications as their key sources of gossip about programming and behind the scenes policy decisions. Consequently the trades have an inside track.

At *Variety* a reporter is assigned to each network, Bill Greeley covers NBC, but he has covered them all. "Nobody really knows anything about television," he feels. Speaking as a 16-year veteran he's not inclined to moderate his innate cynicism. "Each Friday we all go over to the networks and do our 'Bear Dance.'" The Bear Dance according to Greeley, is the *Variety* writer's parade around to the network executive offices for the latest news each week. The rounds include the programming, research, and sales depart-

"The networks are rotten and exploitative, but we all know that..."

ments. The last being "one of the better places to garner information."

"We've got to keep a delicate balance with these guys," he admits, but adds that both sides are using each other. "They know that they've got to give us straight information so that, when they want to run some bull by us, they can get away with it."

Some of that bull appeared to be the networks optimism over station clearances. Each affiliate station has the option of running its own locally produced program or a syndicated show in place of what it's fed by the network. The acceptance by an affiliate of a network program is called station clearance. These agreements are very important to the webs (a *Variety*-ism for the networks) as sales rates are based on potential audience. When pricing new shows with no track records, the number of affiliates carrying the show is critical; thus optimism over clearances helps spur sales.

Most years these agreements come in automatically, but this year with the "family viewing" hours in place and the presence of some strong independently produced shows such as *Space: 1999* some network shows are being bumped. "We'll let them get away with their line this week, but I'm checking around and will get the real story next week." Greeley obviously knows what's happening, but of course, "Variety" likes television....it's what we're all about."

Marvin Kitman likes television too, but is decidedly much more candid in his appraisal of the networks. "They're rotten and exploitative, but we all know that," he says with a smile. Kitman describes his philosophy of criticism by explaining he writes for the "closet viewer"—the person who likes television but often doesn't want to admit it. He is undoubtedly a closet watcher himself, so Kitman tends to have fun with his subject without mincing words.

In an article, "How I Would Improve TV", he suggests a "Broadcasting Act of 1984" that would establish a whole new set of priorities for station licensees. But before that happens he suggests, "as an expression of gratitude to a'l entrepreneurs who risked thousands to make millions in the old days....they (Congress) might proclaim a five-year moratorium period in which all existing license holders will be urged to make as much profit as possible, which for most would not

does) it is in bringing public attention to New York's PBS affiliate WNET.

"Television," he states, "is like a piece of furniture. It can be found in almost every home in America....it is a very important part of our cultural environment." O'Connor views television as a serious medium, worthy of criticism on the same level as that found in film or theater. He is upset that more writers are not dealing with the industry on that level.

Gary Deek of the *Chicago Tribune* shares that view. He points out, "many TV critic-editors got their jobs because their managing editors saw the TV beat as a nice soft, ineffectual spot for a nice, soft, ineffectual reporter." No wonder CBS doesn't like him hanging around during their press tours.

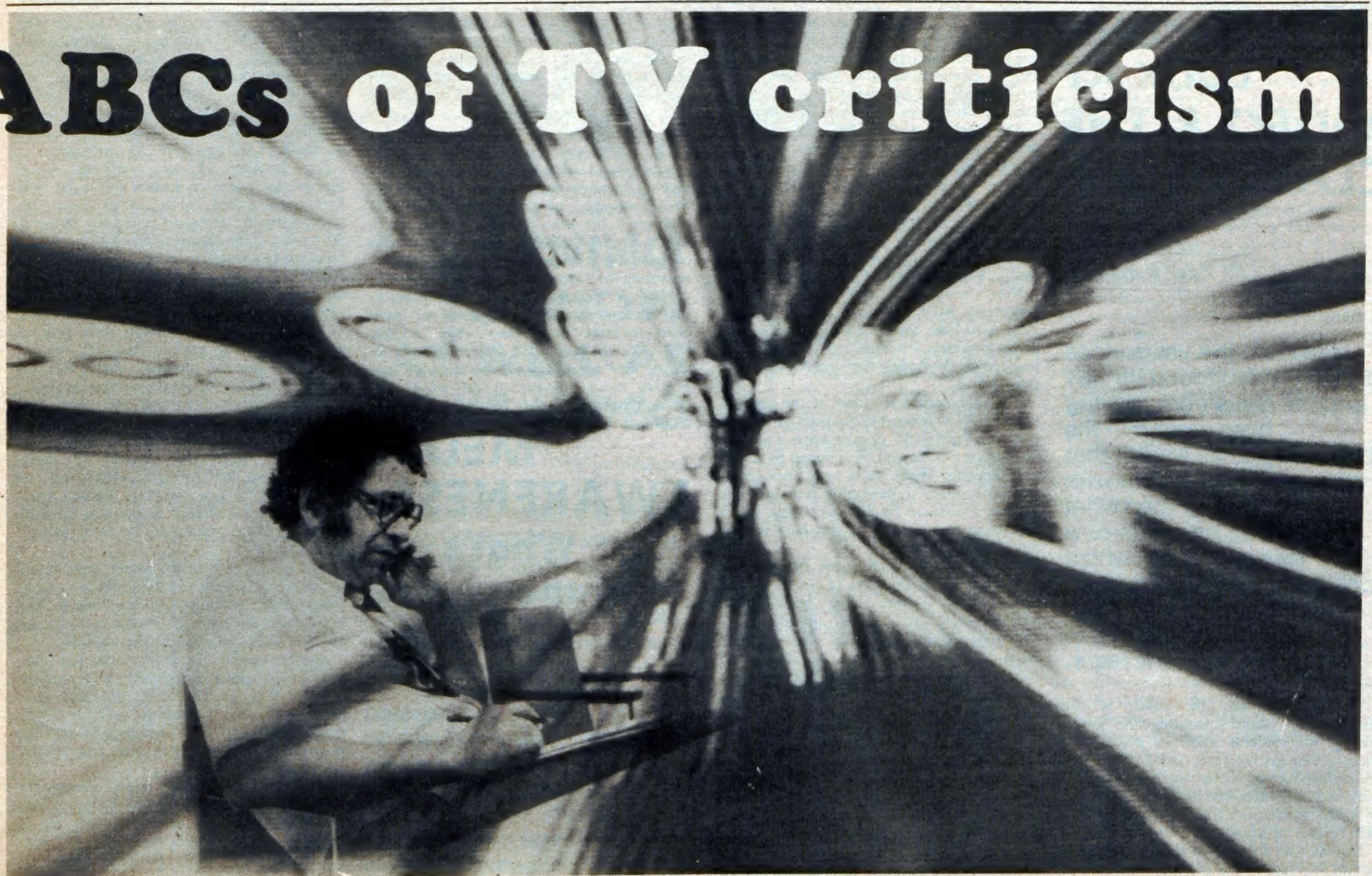
But for the most part he's correct, most newspaper managers call the people assigned to cover television, "editors" rather than critics. At many papers in addition to writing about the medium they have been assigned the task of compiling the daily TV logs, a clerical chore at best.

What we have then in mass circulation daily papers, are two ends of a spectrum.

On one end are the critics, the individuals who see the medium as more than just a glamorous outlet to sell soap. "It's impossible to talk about radio and television in America without taking about American life," writes Ron Powers winner of a Pulitzer prize in 1972 for his television columns in the *Chicago Sun-Times*. "No other critic on the newspaper deals with a medium that reflects so directly the personality, character, hopes, fantasies, distraction, myths, and delusions of the American People." Powers, I fear, is in the minority in his perception.

At the other end of the scale are the hacks who for the most part are merely products of foolish newspaper managements that demand directly or indirectly, that the TV beat be covered in a frothy, showbiz manner. After all, the thinking goes, television is cheap entertainment and not too much significance should be attached to it.

But then again, what more can we expect. Newspapers, like television, are a reflection on ourselves. If we accept what we are spoonfed, what more can we ask for? Like Bill Greeley says, "nobody knows anything about television anyway." Or do we?



Marvin Kitman (above), under an ABC barrage, is the critic for *Newsday*. John O'Connor (pictured at left) notices TV for the *NY Times*. Photo montage by the author.

A SECOND LOOK AT 'VIDEO & THE CLASSROOM'

By Peter Haratonik

It's been five years since portable video found its way into the classroom. Having been around in the beginning when we felt that no matter what we did with kids was better than what was going on—I am now less certain about the positions we had advocated and the ways in which I've seen video applied to education in recent years.

We felt intuitively the power of this medium and began spreading the gospel among our students and our peers. This rhetoric emphasized three ideas. First, that understanding television was an essential "survival skill" and that traditional learning no longer constituted the core of things that kids needed to know.

Second, that TV, by providing a method of instant feedback would provide children with access to both defining and analyzing the world in their own terms. And thirdly, that video was no invaluable tool for reshaping what was felt to be archaic pedagogical concerns in traditional subject areas.

Video was indeed mesmerizing. Once we had access to the tools, portapak opened new worlds for teachers and students alike. Role playing and theatre games took on new dimensions. The community was seen in a new light. Students who had hitherto been

passive or in the other extreme aggressive suddenly had a new voice with which to speak. For the first time, they had access to a medium that so clearly dominated their lives. They could create and explore without having to concern themselves with fears of failure.

The teachers relished the opportunity to develop projects, as they too were a frustrated generation of "viewers" who wanted to become "doers." The nature of the medium broke down the walls of the classroom and served as a catalyst for change. And at the same time it served as a first step towards dealing with the little known effects of mass media, which concerned many educators.

Now, however, I am growing deeply concerned. After five years of working with video with kids, teaching teachers video and giving countless seminars and lectures, I am plagued by the feeling that somewhere we've gone wrong.

The unfortunate tendency of the application of video to education has been for it to be used as a "gimmick" or even worse a placebo to alleviate the frustrations created by school environments. While we've long since recognized that no one technology or technique will become a panacea for all educational ills, it does seem, though, that we may have put too much faith in video.

We only need to look at the stagnancy of education in recent years in terms of new developments, which have been overly lethargic even with economic considerations. This stems mainly from two sources. First, many teachers have looked to video as an instant success mechanism—falling into "the what do I do Monday" school of teaching—and next accepting anything that comes from a higher authority as valid "stuff" to thrust upon their students.

Video, rather than assisting in the process of integrating a variety of disciplines, became merely a tool for stuffing the box. The portapak became a way of delivering old wine in new bottles, and resulted in countless videotaped debates, plays, news shows and baton twirling contests. A graduate student of mine once came to me with a tape of which he was immensely proud. His class did a parody of the Johnny Carson show and what he was particularly impressed with and wanted to show was that one of his students could laugh like Ed McMahon. Another teacher was equally proud of the daily TV news show that was shown closed circuit everyday in the school.

But those of us involved in teacher training are in fact even more guilty than the classroom teacher. In our overzealous attempts to spread the gospel of video we've apparently overlooked a few important steps, and have tended to behave as if teachers were empty boxes in which to stuff our ideas. At one recent video workshop a group of teachers were introduced to the portapak with a series of non-verbal activities designed simply to get them to transact within a limited environment. As in any group of this sort some of the participants were reticent and others flamboyant, but in general most people enjoyed themselves and when they left it was suggested by the instructor that they try

some of these activities with their kids. When they returned the following week many were disillusioned. They had attempted some of these activities and encountered tremendous resistance from their students. The students had no idea what they were doing and why they were doing it.

The teacher was unable to give a rational explanation to either herself or the kids, thus making the whole situation nonsensical in the truest meaning of the word. When she returned to her own video class, she of course took it out on her own instructor, and this confrontation created numerous questions regarding the "whys" of video. And here rests our failure. Because of our innate beliefs in the value of the video experience we quite often give more "hows" than "whys." A child will never ask how to do something until he knows why he is doing it. Unless we can provide those answers to the whys, any attempt in education will be a predetermined failure.

MEDIA AWARENESS: What's not in the picture

By N. Ferris Top

In almost every serious discussion of television someone raises the question of the effects of today's television fare on our society. And, the usual liberal conclusion is generally the same: "There's too much violence, too much sex, too many crass programs and not enough 'good' programming. Therefore, study the problem, alter the objectionable content and give the people something that is good for them."

In community video and educational television circles, the rhetoric is similar: "We are seeking an alternative to commercial television." The preoccupation of all of these groups is with the content and not with the audience. This is true of television production people and those who teach television production. Although the effect of television on our society is a serious and ominous question and the need for alternative content is obvious and long past due, there is a perspective that considers the audience.

"How to" courses in every conceivable subject are offered at every level of education. But strangely enough, people have never been taught "how to" do the one thing they do a lot of, and this is "How to watch television." The result is a startling misunderstanding of what actually comes over the tube by much of the vast U.S. TV audience.

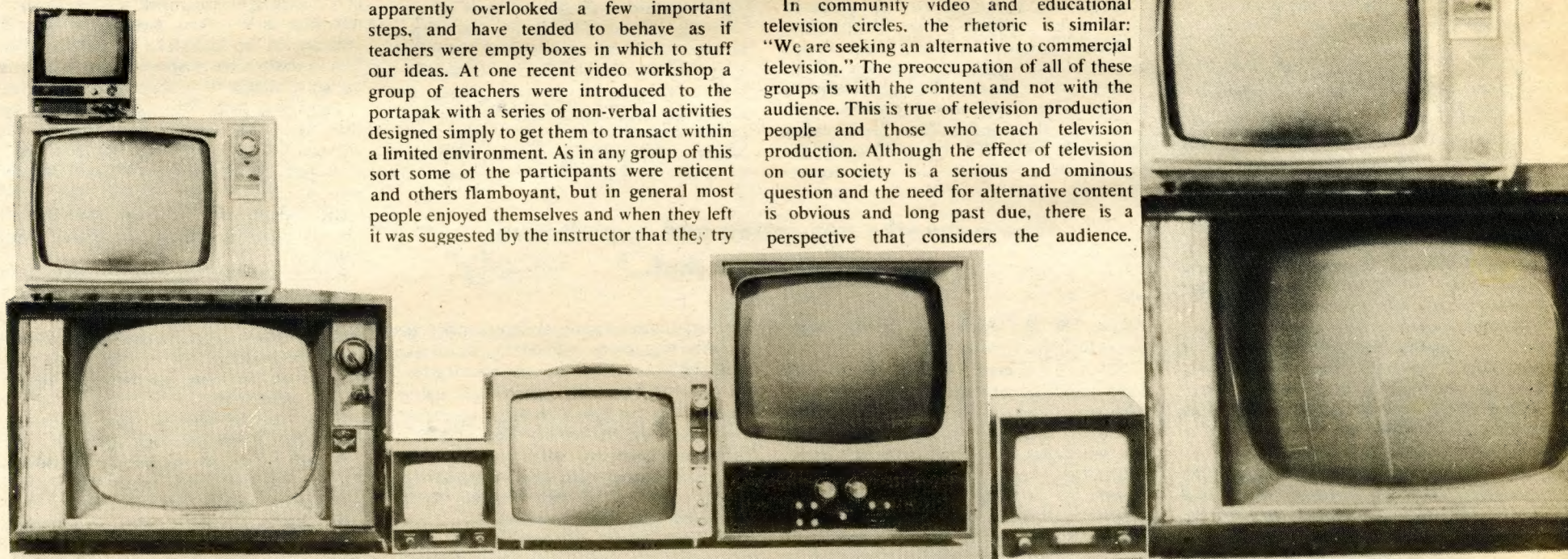
For instance, I was working at a commercial television station the night Neil Armstrong landed on the moon. Since the technicians and engineers were busy insuring the quality of the picture of this historic event, I was left to answer the phone. One caller was absolutely caustic because the pictures from the moon were not in color! Another was adamant about the camera angles and wanted to talk to the director because there was no variety. I tried to explain that this was an incredibly historic moment, there was no director and that the single camera transmitting those pictures was from the moon! The caller disgustedly said, "Star Trek is a helluva lot better than this," and hung up.

We can alter the content of some programming, we can offer alternatives to commercial TV fare, but if we haven't dealt with what our audience is going to do with what we have produced, we have gained nothing.

Our task is to help the viewer understand what they are seeing and dilute the incredible charisma the medium has shrouding it. We must demystify both the production process and the access process to the medium.

At the heart of the issue is the fact that most people relate to television as a *product* instead of a *process*. The educator who understands that students are going to watch television can use both that process and the programs as a catalyst for educational conversations.

We have worked with young elementary students in Portland, Ore., on how to watch TV and how to use television as a communications device. We first show them excerpts from their favorite kinds of



BEYOND OPEN CHANNELS

THE SECOND STEP:

PRODUCTION AS PROCESS

programming and explain the special effects or production techniques that are used to make *The Six Million Dollar Man* or others to appear as if they have superhuman abilities, etc. We talk about the news and how many thousands of stories are being received each day by both networks and local stations and the editorial problems of selecting the 18-20 stories that will ultimately be used. We then show them how TV must select the more visual stories by doing a mock, visually boring but solid content newscast. The ways cameras can deceive us is demonstrated with the use of a portapak. They see the ability to change the appearance of a person by panning the camera up or down, by altering the light, or including or excluding elements in the environment by zooming in or out.

After people have "played" with video, whether it is a portapak or a full studio operation, we ask them to then think of something they would like to communicate to a particular audience. The key is to continually ask would-be television producers "What are you trying to say *and* to whom?" At that point the special effects and the equipment become tools rather than masters of communications.

Students then learn the necessity for research, a well thought out and succinct audio and video script and the need for team effort in the production of this communication. They can rapidly see how the communication can be altered by any number of mechanical or human errors.

The beauty of the process is that although research and script writing are old traditional "term paper" type activities students don't relate to them in the traditional ways because they are creating a "TV" program. The teacher can use the script as a process to improve writing skills and then use the "product" or final program as a catalyst to demonstrate additional communication skills objectives.

Young students have always been around TV and it, therefore, is a non-threatening teaching medium. Although excited they are not too awed by equipment and they almost instinctively frame a camera shot perfectly just from the experience of watching so much television. They frustrate easily, however, when they realize the production of a good telecommunication doesn't happen in 30 minutes like it does on their sets at home.

It is here that they are finally learning how to watch television, that they can discover communications is a difficult process. They realize the equipment only does what a production crew of human beings makes it do and the process of creating video is not equipment, but people. They learn where to watch for special effects and camera angles and to wonder what is not in the picture as much as what is actually being shown.

It is this awareness of the potentials and limitations of the medium that allows them to watch TV differently. They can then marvel at

the technology that put a camera on the moon and gave us a view of ourselves from a quarter of a million miles away. And, they can enjoy the techniques involved in the production of *Star Trek* that allows our fantasies to flicker in living color on that small window in our living room. But most importantly they can distinguish between the two and the effects of that electronic window can be turned into curiosity of what is not seen rather than the passivity of accepting what is seen.

LEARNING TO SHOW AS WELL AS MAKE VIDEO

By George Stoney

I tend to teach out of my own experience, and half-inch video is for me a highly personal medium. While I do not depreciate its potential as a means of reaching vast audiences, I have found it most effective, and most satisfying, when I use it to enhance communication with people with whom I already have eye contact.

This summer while in England I videotaped conversations with aged grandparents to show my children. Later I recorded the simplest daily chores performed by Irish cottager hosts on a remote island beyond Connemara Bay and played it back to them and their neighbors. In both cases the very act of recording and playback encouraged an immediate intimacy that could have taken months to develop.

Back home the "primary audiences" for both tapes asked for repeated showings involving friends. As a part of the recording and the playback, I found I could advance rather quickly and directly to a new level of intimacy and find a welcome response.

What has this got to do with teaching video? Almost everything. For the technical

skills required for video recording are almost as easy to learn as the advertisements claim. What comes hard is deciding what is important to record and designing that recording so it will elicit the desired response from the intended audience.

For tapes like my talks with the grandparents I generally use a technique taught me by Ted Carpenter of Broadside Video in Johnson City, Tenn.: turn a small monitor into a viewfinder by hooking it to RF and placing it at the feet of the persons being recorded. Then you can rest the camera on your lap rather than having it hiding half your face. People being recorded talk to you rather than to an intimidating lens.

Playback almost always follows immediately on the recording. I regard the small monitor—and a battery to drive it when needed—as an essential piece of equipment for almost every recording situation. During playback I try to create the atmosphere I anticipate when showing the tape to other audiences by commenting on what I expect will interest them. This reinforces the feeling of communication on the part of the people whom I have recorded and reduces their concern about "presence".

It is a harmful myth that most people like to see themselves on TV. While it usually appears so, in truth the experience is much more complex and people are often masking their true feelings of dread. I find most people need lots of help to make playback a positive experience. But if I do my job well as playback manager, people are usually more open and giving when I ask them to make further recordings.

Most students I have worked with find the techniques involved in showing videotapes with effectiveness far harder to acquire than those involved in recording. Many are simply too shy or diffident to make the personal investment required. They prefer to hide behind the camera, to hang back and let the zoom lens do the work, to catch people unaware and then manipulate them by context in editing. And when it comes time for their playback they want the audiences to sit in passive silence from beginning to end while they stand back ready to catch the applause when the lights go on. This may be OK for "video artists", but, for people who pretend to be communicators, it's a dead end.

For the past eight months, Jim Brown and I have been training two fair housing organizations in the New York area. Both groups learned to make technically good videotapes in a couple of weeks. It has taken them much longer to become good presenters.

At first they wanted to make tapes like mini-documentaries *a la the Reasoner Report* or *60 Minutes* and soon become so

discouraged by the uncertainties of half-inch video editing that they were on the point of giving up.

Fortunately, along the way we had pressed them to set up dates for playback. There simply wasn't time for smooth editing, often no time for editing at all. They had to be present to fill in gaps, to "freeze frame" and put things in context.

Gradually they discovered that this personal approach gave their tapes authenticity. They became adept at watching their viewers and judging how much of any part of a tape would carry their message and when it was wise to "fast forward" to the next, checking the footage counter to locate the desired spot. Now neither group bothers much with editing. They plan their shooting with continuity in mind, catalogue the tapes carefully afterwards and, thus, have on each single reel a tool that can be made to fit half a dozen different audiences simply by selecting the right sections to show.

We found even the people involved in these purposeful organizations were a bit shy about confronting their intended audiences. Though they talked about wanting to reach welfare officials, county commissioners, realtors and state legislators, most of their communications effort had been spent talking with, or publishing reports for, people who agreed with them and supported them financially.

Even after they had recorded some vivid material documenting social abuses they had to be urged to make appointments to show them to people who were in positions of power and authority. But once they took the plunge they found video a tremendously helpful and a supportive tool. Often now the video presentation is a minor—though important—part of such visits.

With students, too, video often becomes an initiator of communication. Relationships are formed that grow without need for further use of any recording device. As a maker of many documentary films I've often said that my chief reward has been the chance filmmaking has given me to stick my nose into other people's business. Looking back, I blush to think how many times I've filmed and learned without giving anything much in return. Film feedback is difficult, of course. But a larger reason is the tradition of filmmaking itself that is so strongly dominated by ego.

In the eyes of the documentary filmmaker Fred Wiseman, Ricky Leacock and Peter Davis are as much *auteurs* as Ford, Hitchcock, and Bogdanovich. This tradition is growing in video, too, I fear. Perhaps it makes some sense in reference to video artists like Emschwiller, Paik and the Vasulkas. It makes no sense at all for tape makers who honestly want their work to serve as a link between one group of people and another.

In a curious way the very discipline of playing back one's tapes to those who help you make them seems to reduce the amount of ego involvement. Often when a team of video students come back from a shoot-and-show session they have forgotten who was on camera at any one time. With film students this almost never happens. Someday when we are all shooting with electronic cameras there won't be this difference. At least I hope not.

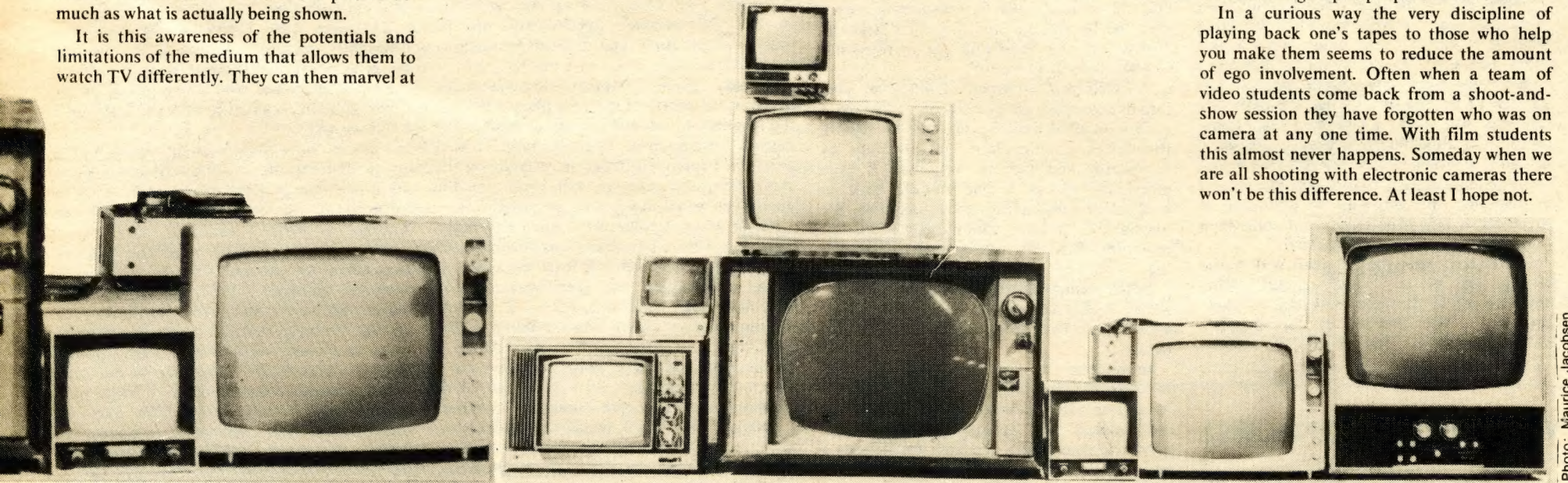


Photo: Maurice Jacobsen

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PROCESS IS OUR MOST IMPORTANT PRODUCT

"But mommy, I'm still in the TV!"

By Victoria Costello

A story told by a librarian in our basic workshop: "We set up a live video playback system in a suburban shopping center mall. A crowd gathered around us, with people straining to see themselves on the monitor. A mother approached, small son in hand. He looked startled to see his own image appear. The mother started to walk away, but the little boy refused to move on. He continued to stare at the monitor, and when

his mother pulled at him to leave, he began to cry. 'but mommy, I'm still in the TV.'"

Mary Casamatsu, excerpt from a video student's diary: "Since there were several new members in the group, the first activity of the evening was to introduce ourselves. Then, as a review and further introduction to the class and its objectives, we watched the playback of a tape made the week before with some of the people in the group introducing themselves on video.

"They introduced their bodies—to me one of the most difficult types of introductions I could conceive of, on or off camera—



Photo: Ann Eugenia Volkov

Beyond boring: process by TP Videospace Troupe

By Susan Milano

from an interview with Victoria Costello

When I first got into video I would very often meet other video people who were doing what they called "real time" tapes which often meant you would sit for an hour and watch while somebody took a bath. If you happen to be the one taking the bath, it's fabulous, you spend a nice long hour doing every little thing you do. But as an observer, my only reaction was, so what? This is not really much different than home movies, yet at the same time this was my definition of process video. It generally meant something that was boring unless you were in it.

In contrast, what the TP deals with is the setting up of a closed circuit video environment so that the workshop or show actually is the process of the people's involvement in it. The process is not the

audience sitting back watching someone else's experience, but rather their own experience.

The best way to describe the kinds of techniques used in a TP workshop would be for me to relate my first experience with one led by Shirley and Wendy Clarke. It was a marathon-weekend exposure to the "fundamentals of video."

We split into two groups. Each group goes into its own space with a portapac. In group A each individual makes a one minute tape of themselves sympathizing, empathizing, by verbalizing and moving. In group B each individual makes a one minute tape of themselves complaining about something. We playback both tapes simultaneously on two monitors. This was usually really entertaining.

In the second exercise, each group selects a set of objects and makes a five minute tape about them. Our group used masks for this tape.

In the third exercise, each group chooses a destination and takes a portapac and a battery-operated monitor. Once in the new environment the group must do video playback there using the tape of objects, a tape of the new environment, and live playback of people in this new environment. Our group ended up at 2 a.m. on the stage of Town Hall doing a video intermission show. It was really crazy.

For the fourth exercise, each group takes a portapac and sets out to record the sunrising any way they choose to represent it. Finally, the entire group reconvenes for breakfast and a final marathon viewing of everything shot during the workshop, played back simultaneously.

I came away from this workshop with a whole new way of looking at video. I was particularly turned on to the potential of television for connecting up of separate spaces and how this "satellite" concept can be explored in a closed circuit video environment.

I try to use similar kinds of exercises in my own workshops. The basic principle is one of learning video through active involvement with it, on many levels.

beginning with whatever piece of anatomy they wanted to talk about and continuing as long as they had something to say, with the camera zooming in on the appropriate spots. Those of us who were new to the class were invited to try this exercise, but being a cowardly lot, we escaped scrutiny with mumblings of "maybe next week."

"As I review the experience, I can assign a positive feeling to the evening, it was fun. But, at least in the beginning, it was one of the scariest things I'd ever put my ego through. While I felt comfortable with the equipment we were using—two studio cameras with attendant cables, lights, and SEG—I had an irrational and long-standing fear of being on camera. I viewed the experience at first as something of a challenge I would have to meet, a fear I would have to conquer, or at best something I would just get used to."

Wonder mixed with terror is the reaction to seeing oneself in video. Children are usually more honest than adults in their response to it. Once they have accepted the new toy, they demand to keep playing with it until they have seen themselves make every face and every body contortion they can possibly dream of acting out. We adults meanwhile will most often self-consciously do our best to avoid the experience, all the time, feeling an equal

fascination for it. Whether we fight it or not, our reaction usually boils down to a simple inability to take our eyes off ourselves.

I believe that this experience is the crux of both learning and using video. I, along with many others, begin all my workshops with the presence of spontaneous video playback to facilitate the group and subject matter introductions. In the usual course of events, people begin to verbally introduce themselves, and suddenly find their voices trailing off while their eyes become fixed on the monitors where they are seeing their own faces staring back at them in confusion. Nervous laughter ensues and the next person stumbles along to keep things going with "my name is...and I work for..." A live video introduction will often take up most of the first night of video class. Usually no one will remember any one's name or much else that was said but they do leave with an intense and instant awareness of the unique qualities of the medium they are about to enter.

One woman in a workshop surprised all of us by coming to the second session of the course with a radically different physical appearance. She was dressed in casual jeans and a flannel shirt in contrast to her chic dress of the first week. She had also cut her

'Kids don't like pointless games: creative video uses

By Theresa Mack

"All right, now, everyone in a circle." I shouted, trying to sound calm and in control of things. Thirty fifth and sixth graders crowded into a circle in the corner of the classroom. It was my first day as video teacher at P.S.75. "We're going to play a game. Everyone will have a chance to use the camera and the microphone." I handed the mike to the boy on my left, and gave the video camera to the girl sitting across from him. The kids on either side of her started pulling at the camera to look through it. She struggled to hold on and gave one of them a punch. "Just wait a minute," I said to the group, sensing their impatience. "You'll all get a turn. We're going to pass the camera and the mike around the circle. Each of you will use the camera to record the person opposite you as he introduces himself and tells us something about himself."

Groans. "This is dumb," someone muttered. But I persisted with my plan. After all, I'd figured it all out ahead of time. The perfect introductory video exercise, I had thought. Everyone will get their hands on the equipment and everyone will appear on the tape. The video ideal. So I persisted. "I'll go first," I volunteered good-naturedly, thinking the only problem was breaking the ice. I took the microphone from the boy next to me and began. "I'm Teri Mack. I'll be teaching video here this year." I paused, feeling awkward. Who was I talking to, the kids or that camera pointed at me? "Ahhh...I live on 106th St...I just got a new bike that I like to ride in the park." I was embarrassed. This is no way for people to talk to each other, I thought. But still I persisted. "OK, next, pass it on." The camera and microphone started moving slowly around the circle. Some kids giggled and blushed as they introduced themselves; other made smart-assed comments. All the while there were interruptions as someone clung to the camera and the next in line struggled to get it for himself. "Pass it on!" I insisted, as kids panned wildly around the room. "No, stupid," screamed an experienced sixth grader to a kid clicking the camera button wildly, "don't push the button. You just stopped the recording!" The circle had become a small mob of kids fighting over equipment and throwing insults and taunts at each other.

"This is not working," I proclaimed. There was a collective sign of relief, and the struggling died down. "Why isn't it working?" They sensed I wasn't playing games anymore, that I really was confused and wanted to hear what they had to say. "You feel stupid saying a sentence about yourself." "I wanted to try out the camera. It's no good if you have to

pass it right on." "Nobody wanted to cooperate." "It's just a dumb game." Everyone drifted away from the equipment, and I wandered around the room talking to kids for the rest of the period. I liked the kids and felt sure we would do good work together, but I still felt uncomfortable about my introduction.

"Later, I described the morning to a friend. 'The kids just weren't up for it. They were too excited, the class atmosphere was too chaotic.' "no," he said, "it was a bad idea. Kids don't like pointless games."

I winced. I knew what he said was true, and it hurt to hear it stated so baldly. I decided right then that, rather than spend more time on introductory video exercises, I would immediately begin working on substantive projects with kids.

The next week I entered the classroom diffidently, feeling sure that I'd ruined my image as a respectable adult. But several kids ran up to greet me, and a few pulled at my arm saying they wanted to make videotapes. I felt reassured.

I needn't have worried about having things to do. Before long I was swept along on a wave of video projects proposed by kids or initiated by me or other members of the Teachers & Writers team.

After working with kids on several projects, I've come to see my role as a kind of producer/director. I offer guidelines and define parameters that I think will insure the success of a project. I try to react honestly to ideas, to camera work, to interviews, offering my personal standards of quality. At the same time, I struggle to remain open - to expect the unexpected; to take risks with kids on projects that seem outrageous or doomed to failure; to acknowledge that sometimes my standards are substantiated only by convention or habit and can, therefore, be influenced by the creative ways that children use video.

DRAMATIC DOCUMENTARY: There is no clear dividing line between fact and fiction, so when using video consider integrating "drama" and "documentary" formats. Students can do video-research (interview someone, or explore a strange place with the camera), and then write a drama based on this information. For example, some might do an in-depth interview with an old person about his past, then write a drama based on the person's life. The interview and drama could be shown together. Another approach would be to make a tape about an issue of concern, which interweaves a dramatic story-line with live-action and interviews. A dramatic structure may enable the students to make a more complex statement than if they were restricted to a standard documentary format.

longish hair short. She explained that seeing herself the week before, she had been negatively impressed with her "goody two shoes" appearance and now wanted to look more individual and casual.

These examples serve to remind us how video can effect our consciousness and potentially our behavior. In our workshops we attempt to structure situations for participants to isolate and experience the special characteristics of the medium. Video's spontaneity and visual intimacy and the specific dimensions of video space can be best understood through active encounters rather than through passive viewing or lectures.

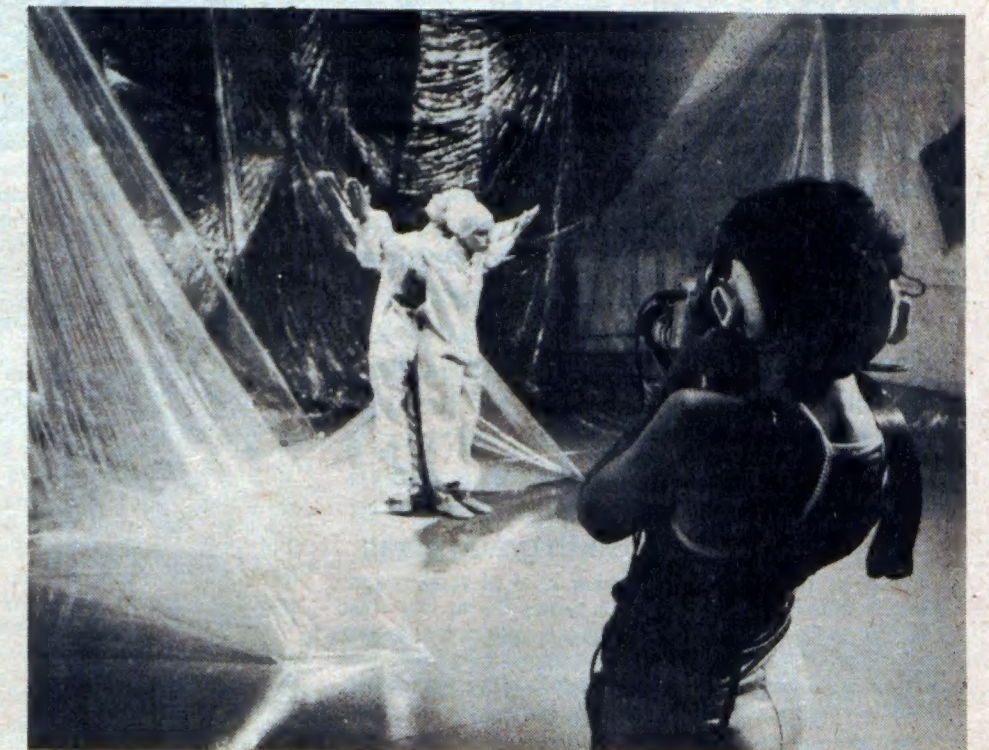
We have many professionals coming to our video workshops from the fields of education, therapy, theater, broadcast TV, and so on. Their presence reflects video's increasing entrance into these fields. It is often astounding to hear of video hardware acquisition by a school or other institution where no one has any idea of how or what to do with it. To meet the needs of people in these kinds of situations, our workshops have evolved from a heavy emphasis on equipment handling and production to include a much larger exposure to the uses of live and taped video in group processes.

The use of this more conceptual, video-process, structure for basic classes has been successful and in fact has also increased the motivation for participants to learn the more technical aspects of the medium. Sometimes, the exercises which we had planned would generate a need for skills that the participants hadn't yet mastered. This would require us to backtrack and deal with the technical gaps before we could carry out a specific video process. Generally, the integration of these levels has proved exciting for all of us in the workshops. Each group is dealing with a similar structure but the possibilities for responses to it are as diverse as the participants involved.

After verbal and physical self-introductions using live video playback, we have used split screens combining camera images from two separate spaces, and experimented with video textures using materials like crepe paper, catnip and confetti to create images that explore the physical dimensions of video-space. After documenting simple movement in the studio, and practicing interaction with pretaped material, we introduced the portapac, recording highly structured exercises before breaking into teams to design and carry out a conceptual piece, shooting tape

outside to be mixed with a live video performance.

There are as many exercises as there are people giving workshops around the country. As a first step in accumulating the experiences in process video and the beginnings of a theory about what works and lessons learned.



Six years of workshops at NY's Global Village

By John Reilly

from an interview with Victoria Costello

In 1969 we started Global Village, technically making us the first video group as such in the U.S. It was an interesting period because no one knew what video was going to do. It was based on a breakthrough in technology, but as yet, a very primitive one. In 1969 we ran the first ad in the *Village Voice* for the first video workshop. Three people responded and they really didn't have any idea what we were talking about. I had to phrase it in film terminology, as they were all filmmakers. They didn't really understand till they got here and took a look at it, that we weren't talking about film.

Videotape, what is videotape? No one had ever seen it. It was an interesting but lonely beginning, a lot of people came to look, to see what we were doing but very few people were actually interested in it. It's a very different scene today where so many people want to experiment with video. It's interesting, though, that people still bring with them such misconceptions about video. There is little general consciousness of the differences between video and film and between video and TV.

For me the evolution from film into video was primarily an emotional response. I didn't realize this until later, but I think the reason I became so immediately enthusiastic about video has to do with the basic spontaneous quality of the medium. It was the idea that it was something that could be done watched and therefore evolved organically that was so exciting to me after having worked in film where there is such a delay in seeing the work.

In the regular workshop sessions we use live video feedback techniques to teach operation of the hardware and at the same time to get people accustomed to using video playback for specific purposes. In one exercise each person creates on tape an environment that they would like everyone else to interact in.

After everyone views one of these pieces, a second person responds to the first by creating another environment....We encourage people to use multiple layers of video, for

instance, last term we did a video version of Krapp's Last Tape. It's Beckett's play of an old man who sits in a basement listening to an audiotape diary of his entire life. We did a video take-off on the same theme, so that the man was playing back pre-recorded videotape portions of his life. This was a useful project to teach past, present and future tenses of video and how they can be used in performance and production.

Generally we try to encourage video students to involve the talent, the subjects, in the process of evolving the work. Either you bring them in as consultants on the editing, or you let them see the material as it's progressing, but in some way you alter your consciousness of the situation by involving people in it. It isn't always successful, and some people don't want to be involved, but this is what we encourage as a video process. It's also the essence of video consciousness.

This is very much in contrast to film where you go in, shoot a subject and that is the last they see of you. Most filmmakers would be horrified if you said, for instance, "you're going to involve the Indians that you shot on the reservation in the editing of the film." They would reply in shock, "What are you talking about it's a technical thing to do in New York in a little room, it's got nothing to do with Indians."

It is the same lack of accountability that exists in network TV programming and often results in an underlying feeling on the part of those subjects that they are being ripped off, and rarely reflected. I don't believe in committees editing tapes, it's usually a disaster. I also don't consider it a viable process to hand over the tape you've shot of a community group and to then ask them to come up with an edit. Even after a few 'lessons' you'll get a mish-mash back.

The point is that these people don't know the capabilities of the medium, or the artistry involved in an edit, but they sure as hell know their lives. You need a highly skilled video person performing the artistic task, and this is becoming more and more so as people begin to compare video to broadcast television. On the skills level we need to maintain a high standard of quality, but the content level, and on how you use it and where your head is at, that's where the differences are at with video.

GRAFFITI IN THE STREETS. Two

Graffiti-artists are caught in the act by a tough cop and thrown in jail. As they sit in their cold cell, they reminisce about the thrill and trials of graffiti-writing. Effective use of documentary and interview material for flashback scenes. (20 min., 6th graders)



Photo: Este Gardner

VIDEO HISTORY. Choose a particular time period in living memory (the depression, World War II, immigration in the early 1900's) and talk to several people about their lives during that time. Or do an in-depth interview with one person, allowing him to talk freely about his life. Or explore local history by talking to people who've lived in your area for most of their lives. You may want to videotape particular sections of town the person once knew well, then show the person these visuals while audiorecording his comments on what has changed. Old photographs could be used to supplement a video history, and might be particularly meaningful as part of a family history. After gathering this kind of oral history, you and your class might do an interesting study comparing the rich oral history of a particular era to the more one-dimensional record in a history textbook.

A 5th-6th grade class at P.S.75 has established a relationship with a senior citizens residence across from the school. In-depth interviews and video history, as well as collaborative works in drama, creative writing, film and video are developing out of children's relationships with the residents.

IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW. On-the-street or off-the-cuff interviews are easy to get. Instead, try some interviews which go deeper and give a sense of who the person interviewed is. Have plenty of tape with you and let it roll non-stop. You never know when your subject will relax and talk more personally or engagingly to

you. Let your subject see the video playback, and approve the final edit before it's shown publicly. If possible, videotape your subjects in their everyday contexts, doing what they ordinarily do. As a variation, try making a tape that shows a person at work rather than talking about himself. A good source for these tapes are the people around you everyday who you may know very little about.

An Afternoon With Anna: Anna Heiney, Heiney, who lives in the senior citizens residence across the street from P.S.75, talks with children about her childhood and old age.

MONOLOGUES & CAMEOS. In small groups, children develop dramatic situations, and each child chooses a character. The children then develop their characters' identities, through poetry—or songwriting. They should give careful thought to details, such as how the character walks, talks and dresses, what his past was like, what he thinks about when he's alone. Then each child does an improvisational monologue based on his character development, and the monologue is videotaped. A tripod-mounted camera with little camera movement is effective. Or turn the camera on and leave the student alone in the room if he wants. Playback the monologue immediately, and allow the student to redo it until he is satisfied. Three or four attempts are often necessary to develop a strong, authentic character. A series of such monologues done by related characters may then lead into a skit, which could be loosely scripted or improvisational. This activity can be the material for finished tapes, or an exercise for actors in a more complex or scripted drama.

MONOLOGUES & CAMEOS, I: The Farmer and His Wife; Smart and Stupid Monsters; The Dressing Room. (30 min.)

MONOLOGUES & CAMEOS, II: The President's Kidnappers; Rabbit. (20 min.) (both tapes made by 3rd-4th graders)

VIDEO SOAP OPERA: Using television soap operas as a model, students may write their own soap opera, or perhaps even a series. They might do a spoof of a television show, which deals with love and hate, birth and death. Or they might attempt to deal with an unusual subject (e.g. fighting in the classroom) through this format. Imitation of the camera style and the melodramatic acting used in tv soaps will be important if the take-off is to be successful.

SHADOWS OF LIFE: The Gilfrey family faces a crisis when the wife starts playing around with the mailman in this half tongue-in-cheek, half-serious Child's Version of a Soap Opera. (15 min.; 4th-5th graders)

REAL-LIFE SOAP OPERA: KIDS PRODUCE THEMSELVES

Details of an intimate production

By Theresa Mack

They were a giggly, babyish group of girls. Rocio, always pinching or hitting someone, then running around in circles and laughing hysterically. Heidi, one moment sensible and calm, the next, chasing Rocio and squealing with abandon. The other girls—Migdalia, Margaret, even the older ones, Norma and Elizabeth—all slipped into this silly distracted behavior whenever they were together. Which was most of the time. They sat next to each other in class, forming a club of whispered make-believe within the more sophisticated atmosphere of their fifth-sixth grade class.

When we first talked about what kind of videotape to make, it didn't surprise me that a family drama was what appealed to them most. Their first idea was to make puppets and act out a little story for the video camera. But their love of playing out family scenes made it clear to all of us that they should act out the story themselves.

This was my first venture into video drama, and I felt unsure of where to begin. "What's the story going to be about?" I asked the group, hoping that someone had a simple, interesting plot tucked away in her mind. "Well," said Heidi firmly, "we're going to call it *How To Live Without a Father*, because we're all girls." And instinctively they knew their roles. Elizabeth would be grandmother, Norma the mother, and Heidi, Rocio and Migdalia their daughters. Margaret and Diane would double in small walk-on parts and on the video crew.

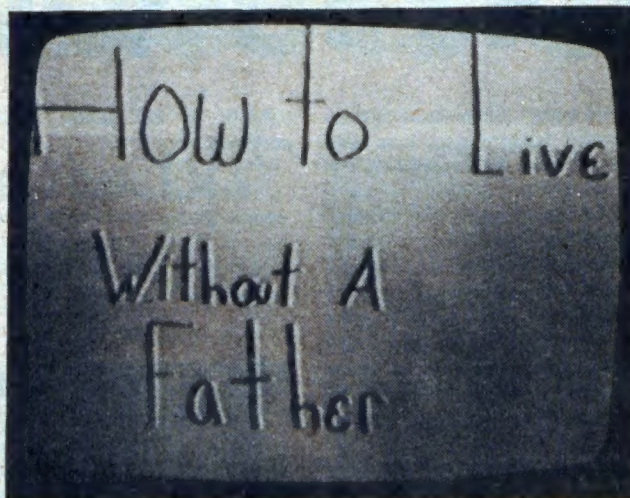
I was impressed with how effortlessly they decided on these important basics, and how sure they were of their decisions. I really liked the title. *How To Live Without a Father*. It was simple and direct, and at the same time poignantly evocative. In the weeks that followed, as the project went through countless transformations, this title was to be our main source of stability and inspiration.

Unsure of how to proceed, yet feeling the responsibility of adult organizer, I assigned Heidi and Rocio to put the group's story ideas into script form. The two girls labored over the script for a few sessions, but were unable to get beyond the first petty fight among the sisters. They kept rewriting the dialogue, and recopying page one to make it neater. Since the group seemed ready to act out their story, we left the writing-room and moved to the auditorium.

The girls adored the stage and immediately became theatrical. They dragged old furniture from off-stage to create homey sets, and divided the action into scenes, closing and opening the curtains between acts. I sat in the front row and watched, awestruck, as they acted out a complex scenario about a family of women dealing with a divorce between the mother and father. Much of the action was typical "playing-house-style": petty fights, spankings, running away from home. But certain scenes were exceptionally good, for instance, the scene in family court. Norma, as mother, told the judge her husband had left her because he wanted sons, and she had borne daughters. I sat bolt upright as I listened to that dialogue, and felt convinced that a dramatic structure which allowed the girls to explore their feelings about being deserted by a father/husband would result in a powerful dramatic work. But I still didn't know how to weed out superfluous action so that the focus of the play would be the emotions and relationships within the family.

After a few sessions of acting out scenes on the stage, I felt we were ready to start working with the video camera. But by now the girls had fallen in love with the stage, and wanted to do a stage-play rather than a videotape. I talked to them about using a camera to make scenes more dramatic; about the power of on-location shooting, and the advantages of taping a scene over and over again until it was perfect. Still they were unconvinced, and I realized they had no experience and therefore no understanding of what "making a videotape" was all about. But I had a strong sense that the subtleties of their family situation would be best reflected through the eyes and ears of the video camera, so I argued forcefully for video. They grudgingly gave in and we moved into production.

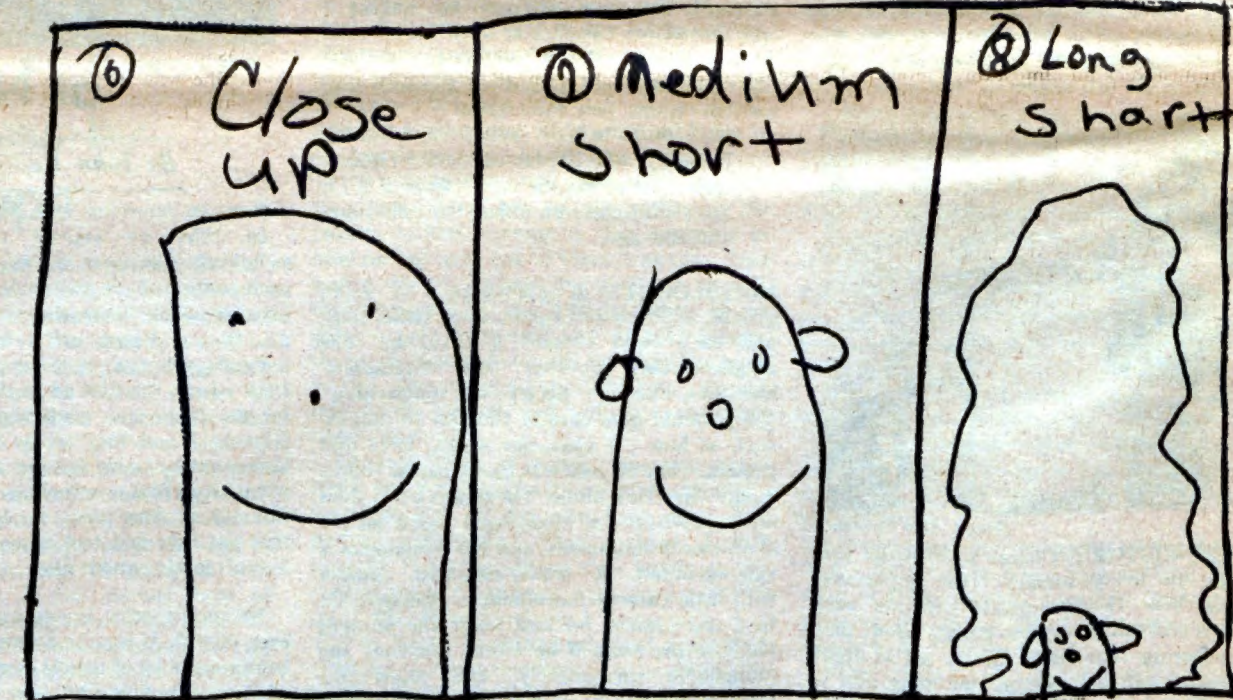
Before we started to tape the play itself, I felt the girls needed a chance to become familiar with being taped and seeing their own video images. I also wanted to have a chance to be alone for a while with each of the girls, so I could get to know them better as individuals and they could get better



acquainted with their own characters. The family members in *How To Live Without a Father* still lacked complexity and individual identity, and blended into one group of hysterical females. So one at a time I brought the girls into the writing room with me and sat them down in front of the video camera. I asked each one to talk about her character—what she was like, what she loved and hated, how she felt about her family.

This was especially difficult for Rocio, Heidi and Migdalia, who played the three daughters. It was apparent that they hadn't thought much about who their characters were. Migdalia sat silent in front of the camera for three or four minutes before she began to talk haltingly about herself as Jacqueline. Their confrontations with the camera were valuable. They struggled with the question of who they were and, though they giggled at the playback, they liked seeing themselves on TV. Now I no longer got blank looks when I talked about making their story into a videotape.

For Norma, the mother, and Elizabeth, the grandmother, this monologue exercise was especially rewarding. A depth of acting emerged during the exercise which excited all of us. Norma, the quietest member of the group, who always smiled softly at the others' silliness but rarely joined in; Norma—who had struck me as painfully shy—now sat in front of the camera with dignity and ease, talking about herself, her desires and her frustrations. As I watched her, I forgot that



she was twelve years old. I saw a depth of awareness and sensitivity that I'd never noticed before. I wondered whether she was identifying with an older family member—her mother, a cousin, an older sister? Or did she already feel within herself the seeds of frustrated womanhood?

Norma had asked that Elizabeth stay in the room during her monologue. Elizabeth—loud, melodramatic, hyperactive—watched carefully and was obviously impressed with Norma's acting. Then she sat in front of the camera, eager to do as Norma had done. But as soon as she faced the camera, Elizabeth began to giggle and squirm with discomfort. She struggled to maintain her role as grandmother, but her mind kept going blank. I prompted her with questions about herself and her family, but still her monologue was empty and awkward.

These two monologues, though different in content and style, revealed the importance of the relationship between the mother and the grandmother. Phillip Lopate and I had been working on a project using monologues as lead-ins to improvised scenes between related characters. The improvisations really seemed to benefit from the monologues, which gave the characters a chance to develop their individual identities. So I decided to carry Norma's and Elizabeth's monologue exercises a step further.

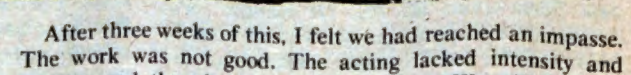
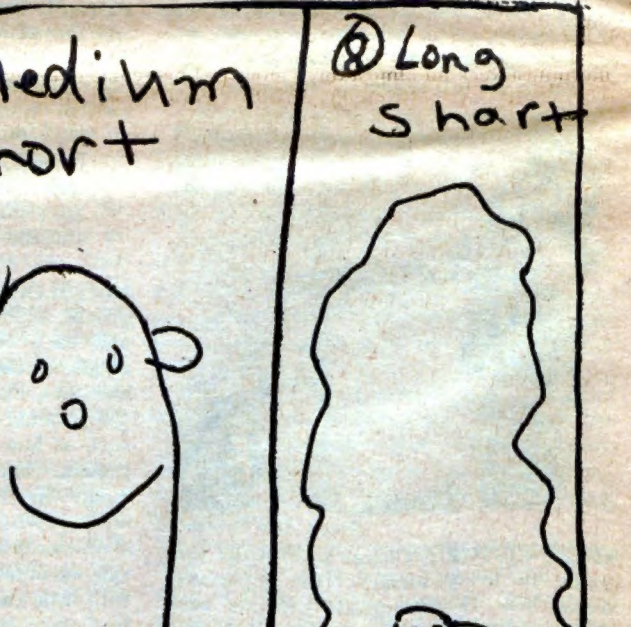
I asked the two girls to act out a scene together—to forget about the storyline of their drama and just talk to each other about the things on their minds. They nodded, quickly established a lunchtime setting with table, chairs, and a few cups, then slipped into their characters and acted out an intense scene of conflict. It was as if they'd lived through it before. The grandmother picked at her daughter for not

wanting a new husband to replace her divorced one, and chided her for being more interested in keeping a job and maintaining her independence than running a proper home. The grandmother was often hysterical—shouting, talking rapidly, cutting off her daughter mid-sentence. The daughter spoke quietly and firmly, explaining that she would marry only if she met the right man, and not just for the sake of stability or respectability. She accused her mother of always trying to run her life, and in her forcefulness seemed to be struggling to gain independence from her domineering mother.

When Norma and Elizabeth had finished, we invited the rest of the girls into the writing-room to watch the playback. We gathered around the little TV and, as we watched the scene, excitement rippled through the group—little gasps of amazement and excited little jumps. The acting was beautiful and the scene was very powerful. All eight of us agreed that it was time to begin taping the "real" play.

The next week we took the video equipment to Heidi's house to tape the first scene. It was an incredibly chaotic day. The excitement of being out of school, and the adventure of being in a strange apartment was too much for the girls. The actresses began "playing house" with gusto, and paid little attention to the camera and mike, making it difficult to tape anything effectively.

With all the distractions of a real home—kitchen, bathroom, piano, cats, Heidi's baby sister—the action became very fragmented. The girls seemed to lose their sense of character, which we'd struggled to develop over the past few weeks. I also realized that they had little sense of scene development and "denouement." Their approach to making a "movie" was a very literal one—to leave nothing implied, assumed or suggested, but to have everything happen in front of the camera. Since they wanted to follow the person who, in the middle of an argument, left to go to the bathroom, then return later to the argument, their scenes lacked focus or a central dynamic. And their improvisational acting, which on stage and in the writing-room had been so powerful, now wilted in front of the camera's cold eye. Scenes rambled on, dialogue became repetitious, arguments seemed interminable and boring, and the ending of a scene was often awkward and inconclusive.



After three weeks of this, I felt we had reached an impasse. The work was not good. The acting lacked intensity and energy, and the play was going nowhere. We still had not resolved all the specifics of the plot. We had all hoped that once we started videotaping, the plot would resolve itself. But this wasn't happening, and we were all getting very discouraged. I was beginning seriously to wonder whether this project would ever come to fruition.

Phillip and I went for coffee at a nearby Nedicks, and I blurted out my concern for the project. "This dramatic structure just isn't working," I moaned. "I get so angry with them because they can't condense the action into scenes. But none of us lives his life in scenes, so why should that kind of structure come naturally to them?"

"Look, why don't you use your own apartment for the taping," Phillip suggested. (I had mentioned that we were all a little tense about messing up somebody's mother's house.) "And, since these girls really seem to want to play house, then let them play house. Give them the run of your apartment, and have the video crew tape whatever they do—in real-time. In other words, make a documentary about the family with the camera following them, instead of asking them to act out dramatic scenes for the camera."

I thought about Phillip's suggestions, and began to get a sense of new guidelines to offer the kids that would better direct their energies toward producing a good dramatic work. Suddenly the whole structure of *How To Live Without a Father* became clear. The video drama would be one day in the life of this family—from rising in the morning to going to

continued on next page

bed at night. There would be one key event—the arrival of a letter from the absent father agreeing to a divorce, a scene the girls had already developed as central to their drama. But nothing else about the day would be predetermined. All action would take place within the apartment, thus resolving the question of outdoor scenes which might distract from the important family dynamics, and imposing a focus of time and place on the actresses. Within this rather tight structure, I now felt sure that the wealth of material they had developed—through the improvisational acting on stage, the monologues, and the abortive taping in other people's apartments—would be transformed into a rich videodrama.

I described the new rules of the drama to the girls. They all immediately understood and accepted them—a good sign that the structure was a right one. Then I took everyone to my house so they could get familiar with their new set. They ran around the apartment—opening closets, jumping on beds, giggling—then suddenly quieting down, overwhelmed at having this liberty in someone else's home. I assured them that I wanted them to become familiar with my apartment so that next week, when we did the taping, they would be comfortable living a whole day in my house, as if it had been their home for years. We discussed costumes, props, and breakfast and lunch menus. Then I prompted them for a few more skeletal details. Since it was now a few weeks before Easter, they decided the story would take place on the Friday before Easter. We discussed how the family would spend the day—the children playing, watching, dyeing Easter eggs; the grandmother and mother cleaning house, fixing meals, and talking. Everyone agreed that the father's letter should arrive when the family was sitting around the lunch table and that the story should end with everyone going to bed at night. Other than these few details, the specific sequence of events and the conversations among family members would be left to improvisation.

The final preparation was to compose the letter from the father. Norma dictated the letter to me: "Dear Mary, I have received your letter, and if you want to get a divorce it's all right with me. I'm sorry but I just can't accept the responsibilities of being a father." She signed it with her father's name. We left my apartment, feeling tense and excited about next week's taping. If things went well, the taping would be done in one long shooting session. If things didn't work out...well, I wasn't sure where we would go from there.

By now we had all spent a lot of time together—one morning a week for almost three months. I had come to know each of the girls individually; I really enjoyed spending time with them and no longer saw them as simply a pack of silly girls. When we left school and walked to people's apartments to videotape, family matters were the main topic of conversation. Everyone talked about deaths, divorces, births, and marriages. We talked about these things casually yet seriously as we walked along Broadway. I never started the conversations or probed very deep, or formalized the talks into "rap" sessions. We simply all shared some of the pain we'd gone through with our families and some of our fantasies about what family life could be. A few of the girls had new, foster fathers, but still idolized their real fathers in spite of their mothers' attempts to convince them they were no good. Others came from very stable two-parent families. *How To Live Without a Father* was an amalgamation of their family experiences and concerns. The story was never directly autobiographical for anyone. Like all good drama, it came out of and yet transcended personal experience. Our talks brought us closer, and the intimacy of sharing family experiences helped the girls take each other more seriously, especially as they acted out their drama.

The shooting day arrived, and we left school early for my apartment. While the actresses bustled around, fixing up rooms and changing into pajamas, Diane, Margaret and I set up the video equipment and talked about the taping. Their role, as documentarians, was going to be very difficult, because they had never done it before. They had been working with the equipment over the past few weeks, and Diane especially was familiar with the camera. But today they would be taping live-action, deciding when to start and stop the videocorder as the actresses kept on living their day; trying to work smoothly and unobtrusively so the actresses would not lose concentration or fall out of character because of some technical complications.

Contributors

Dr. Richard Blaustein is director of the SAVES project and a Professor at East Tenn. State Univ.

Susan Milano coordinates the video workshops and video shows at the Women's Interart Center in New York City. Since she began working with the medium in early '71 she has shown her work both here and abroad, taught numerous workshops, developed video as a tool used in counselor training and coordinated the Women's Video Festival since its inception in 1972.

Bill Robinson and Charlie Brown are directors of the Charleston Communications Center a community arts and media center funded by NEA and the South Carolina Arts Commission.

Joan Goldsmith is co-director of the Institute of Open Education, Antioch Graduate Center, Cambridge, Mass. She has been using process video in teacher training and as a family therapist since 1969.

John Reilly is director of Global Village in New York.

Dick Barton coordinates the community television arts program for the LA County Dept. of Parks and Recreation.

Peter Haratnik works for the Center for Understanding Media in New York and co-edited the "Video & Kids" issue of Radical Software.

Theresa Mack makes documentary videotapes, teaches video and film for Teachers and Writers Collaborative at P.S. 75 in NYC and has run several community video workshops. She is on the adjunct faculty of the Center for Understanding Media Graduate Program, New School for Social Research.

Ferris Top is television supervisor for the Portland, Ore. public schools.

George Stoney is the co-director of the Alternate Media Center of NYU.

Vicki Costello who coordinated this special issue is also the coordinator of video workshops at the Washington Community Video Center and an NEA grantee.

Larry Kirkman who coordinated this special issue has been a writer/director for Video Works in LA and is an editor of TeleVISIONS.

Teachers and Writers Collaborative is a non-profit organization that sends writers and other artists into NYC schools to develop ways to reach children through the arts. They conduct workshops with children and teachers in writing, film, video, art and drama. The program is carried out with the support of the NY State Council on the Arts and National Endowment for the Arts.

I sat with the whole group for a few quiet moments before the "day" began, reminding the actresses one last time that they should try and ignore the video equipment and live their day non-stop, from rising in the morning till going to bed at night (in reality, from 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.). Then the actresses crawled into bed, giggling with tension. Diane, Margaret and I left the apartment, then walked back in with the video machine recording. Diane panned the living room, then walked slowly into the bedroom, followed by Margaret with the mike. And me holding cables so they wouldn't trip. As Diane panned slowly around the quiet bedroom, the radio alarm went off, as planned. Grandmother, Mother and Judy rolled out of bed. Soon the whole family was hurrying around, brushing teeth, combing hair, and fixing breakfast. The day had begun.

From that moment on, something was happening that seemed larger than all of us. Elizabeth, Norma, Heidi, Rocio and Migdalia became a family. They chatted, bickered, scolded, played, cleaned up, and passed the time. They moved around my apartment with ease, as if they'd lived there all their lives. Each person's character emerged, stronger and more defined than ever before. Elizabeth, as grandmother, ran the house and disciplined the children, yet was strangely unsure of herself and thrown off balance by the slightest crisis. Whenever an argument developed, she wanted to escape or soothe things over. Norma, as mother, was quiet but firm in all her words and actions. She was the center of strength and understanding in the family, and at the same time was the most isolated.

Even the daughters, who until now had always acted in unison, became individuals. Migdalia, as Jacqueline, the oldest, was most like her mother—quiet, very perceptive, sometimes pitted against her mother whom she observed so closely. Heidi, as Margaret, the middle daughter, was still wrapped up in a childish world, had a streak of quiet rebelliousness, and was often sullen or snotty with adults. Rocio, as Judy, the baby of the family, was incorrigible, but always loving and lovable.

This family of five women literally possessed the house as they lived through their day. I worked closely with the video crew who followed the family around, taping almost everything, unless one activity—such as a meal—went on for a very long time. We had to stay finely tuned into the emotion and action—especially when the family split up into different rooms.

As the day wore on, I often collapsed into a chair and watched in amazement this family life going on around me. It was unnerving. The girls rarely came out of character. The only directions I gave were occasional technical ones so the camera would be sure to capture a crucial scene. The actresses seemed to operate with a double consciousness—cooperating subtly with the technical crew and at the same time remaining totally absorbed in their family experience.

Near the end of the day came an especially poignant scene. The mother and grandmother sit talking as the girls get ready for bed. The mother is depressed because she thinks the girls feel lonely, and she's afraid they blame her for the divorce. She decides to talk to them one by one.

The scene is, perhaps, a wish fulfillment for all the girls—the wish that parents would always take the time to explain family crises, like divorces, gently but honestly. It also showed the degree of self-insight the girls had about how they

subvert the scoldings of authority figures by passing in and out of childish behavior. When the mother talked with Judy, I heard echoes of my own attitude towards the girls and their behavior when I first began working with them.

Mother: Judy, do you think it's my fault because I'm getting a divorce from your father?

Judy: (sullenly) No.

Mother: Now why don't you think it's my fault?

Judy: (babyish singsong voice) I don't know.

Mother: (tenderly) I'm going to explain something to you. Your father is...well, he's not like any other man, to be tied down to people. Judy is playing with a paper bag that has little toys in it! Now look at me when I'm talking to you. Look at me; Judy leans into her mother's face in a playful and exaggerated manner.)

Judy: (babyish voice) Why?

Mother: I'm trying to explain something to you...

Judy: (impatiently) So why don't you?

Mother: I am. I wrote to your father asking him for a divorce. I think that was right for you and right for me and right for your sisters...and right for your father. And if you don't think that's right (Judy suddenly snatches up her paper bag)...And I want you to start acting a young lady, not like a little kid. You're growing up! (Judy blows up the bag and is about to pop it. Mother reaches out to take it from her but Judy quickly pulls it out of her reach, giggling.) You're growing up and you should learn that. (Mother reaches again for the bag but again Judy pulls it away, laughing wickedly.) Now would you please stop laughing...

Judy: (cleverly as if she didn't hear) Start laughing?

Mother: Stop.

Judy: (casually) All right. (She blows into the bag again.)

Mother: (annoyed) Would you stop doing that.

Judy: (putting the bag down) All right, all right.

Mother: (Looks her in the eyes) I'm going to tell something straight to you. You act like a lady...

Judy: Yeah.

Mother: Because if you don't...

Judy: So. I don't.

Mother: You have to act like a lady. You can't just act like a little girl. You're growing up. People are going to say you're stupid or something, or "She's crazy." And you're not! You're a young lady. Now, you should understand that. Do you?

Judy: (grudgingly) Yuh.

Mother: Okay, you may go.

Judy: At last! (She runs from the room.)

LOS ANGELES PARKS DEPT. USES VIDEOVAN

By Dick Barton

As media workers in the LA Parks and Recreation Department, we put 8mm film, then portable video into the hands of young people in East Los Angeles. We concentrated primarily on youths in gangs in this section of the city, largely Mexican-American.

We began on a neutral piece of ground (with clubhouse) at the Casa Maravilla cooperative (at the nexus of four otherwise competing gangs) in 1970 by teaching camera care and use, lighting, scripting and editing. We wanted the teens to film their environments and then use those films as teaching tools. By viewing and evaluating, they'd be learning "correct" cinematography, we thought. We hadn't gotten into video at the time. That would come two years later followed by a National Endowment for the Arts grant.

We used an experimental approach, realizing that a formal presentation would not work. But when these teens began shooting, we noticed they cared little for the standard film framework—good camera techniques vs. bad ones—but instead developed a framework of their own.

Their new framework simply made "good" what they liked, no matter how sloppy or meaningless it appeared to the instructors. But their films drew measurably greater responses from their peers than commercially produced films. We figured there might be something here that we could learn.

By the second summer of the program, the participants began to show a deepening trust of us by producing films of an increasingly personal nature. They filmed each other carrying guns on the street, going on rabbit hunts and bloodily assaulting the carcass, getting drunk on cheap wine. One of the teens actually shot an inside view of a street riot that occurred that summer. We knew our

students had set up an eyeball-to-eyeball situation with us, daring us to blink first.

We were aware of the "game" situation that had been created. It didn't surprise us that the gang members would create a structure where, if they wanted to reject program out of hand, they could without having to come up with a real reason. If we didn't play the game, they felt they would have every right to pack up and go home.

But this program—from the beginning—was designed to make these teenagers make decisions built on real data and reasoning. We changed our technique from "Why is picture A better than picture B?" to "Why is picture A what you like?" The participants were no longer second-guessing film aesthetics but were consciously establishing their own criteria.

In 1972, we switched to video. There were three reasons for the shift in media: 1) the staff was more oriented, by then, to using the equipment for decision making and

personal growth than "fine art," 2) the relative nonsophistication of video made it usable by almost everyone, and 3) the mobile, floating feature of the van program was best suited to video.

Technically, the VideoVan is a Dodge panel van equipped with three cameras (two attached to independent portapak); two edit-capable decks; two video mixers; an audio mixer; four monitors and sundries such as microphones, lights, battery packs, etc. The components are interchangeable—half-inch, black and white, EIAJ standard—and provide for both location and studio situations.

The tapes produced by the VideoVan Program generally fall into one or more of three categories:

A) *Free Play* tapes are the product of street corner youth congregations or other unorganized groups. Most groups will turn out these free form type tapes as their initial endeavor; a careful review of the finished

tapes will sometimes give us a clue as to whether or not the group is interested in—or capable of—further development.

B) *Portapak Documentaries* generally show a slightly higher level of discrimination on the part of the cameramen. Generally the information is recorded in a sequence that will inform, if not convince, the viewer of the film-maker's point of view.

C) *Developed Films* are produced by groups, and purposefully use the medium to record situations which have been, in part, created for the purpose of being filmed. The participants working at this level are generally not content with what we might term "moving snapshots." This third category seems to be the highest degree of sophistication possible with the program as we have developed it. Realized potentials within this category include tapes documenting drug abuse (made by teens to show to their parents at home), autobiographical dramas prepared by male and female teenagers in order to define themselves, and youth interviews of community leaders and personalities (which show, by subject choice and question content, a subtle probing for answers to the question, "How do I grow up?").

Not for public viewing

It should be noted that *none of the films are for public viewing*. It is the tacit understanding we have with program participants that the films are "theirs," and that we cannot show them at will, even within the department. For the most part video equipment is not to be found in the home, so they cannot have any use for the tape without "checking out" a deck and monitor, so the "no-show" agreement is fairly reciprocal. This emphasis on privacy is an outgrowth of the Casa Maravilla genesis. Showings in the community are set up at the request of the participants, to audiences from 10 to 800.

In practice, the program is chiefly a tool for each participant's development as a decision-making individual. The development of an individual's communicative statement requires the determination of a point of view, the articulation of how to say it, the experimentation with how the medium works for or against a given communicative mode, and the organization of a group of people to deliver and record the statement. Each of these steps requires that decisions be made—and made in the correct sequence. Each decision-making level must be achieved before the participants can go on to the next step and eventually finish their tape. Responsibility for—and power—and power over—the equipment is in the hands of the participants and their community throughout the process. Each community is free to develop its own 'visual language.'



REALITY DRAMA

"Eddie's Love" was shot the summer before NEA funding, and was the first tape requiring extensive scripting, rehearsing, shooting and editing. The core of the group consisted of two sisters, but the completion of the project actively involved more than 40 participants, and the tape has been shown in community showings to more than several thousand people throughout southern California. In this film, we see that a young man

and young woman are deeply in love, but from their conversation in a park we learn that the girl's father is dead set against the match. That evening Eddie visits the girl's home in order to talk to her father, so they can avoid clandestine meetings in the park. Eddie and the father have an argument, with the father calling Eddie a "Chicano revolutionary" and Eddie maintaining that he is a "Chicano evolutionary." At the peak of the argument, Eddie leaves; a few moments later the girl races out of the house to find him. She is run down by a passing auto. The final image on the tape is a tableau of mourners in the street, with an overall image similar to the end of *Romeo and Juliet*. The tape is notable for its



attention to detail; a two month search was conducted for an auto with the right kind of dent in the front right upper fender to appear in a tiny corner of the last scene. The tape is also bilingual; conversations with parents in the home are in Spanish, but switch to English when teens are speaking with one another or are outside the home. A young man named Raul Rivera was walking across the park one day and was flattered into acting the role of Eddie. One year later, Raul began to produce the male side of the teen autobiography, "Pelado."

"Pelado," or more commonly, 'Raul's tape,' was started as the male equivalent to "Eddie's Love" but grew into more. In a sense, this tape was used as the reason for many of field staff demands for faster equipment repairs, more assignments of temporary-permanent vehicles, and so on: all of these were needed for "Raul's tape."

The story concerns a young man looking for a job in East Los Angeles today; in the span of one day he argues with his parents, who accuse him of loafing and searches unsuccessfully for a job. The entire tape was shot on location, requiring storeowners to play themselves, clerks at employment agencies and housing project patrolmen to do the same—and all to see what they look like to others. The tape exists in two versions: the hour-long version is roughly 80% footage of Raul walking the streets looking for a job; most of this walking is edited out of the 30 minute version. The route followed by Raul through East Los Angeles is extremely accurate; each section was shot at different times, but at the right time of day so the angle of the sun would be right. Interestingly, the response of Anglos to the tape is that there is too much walking; the Chicano response is that there is not enough.

EVERYONE IS HISTORY

Continuing Appalachian Culture

By Richard Blaustein

Since September 1974, the Special Projects Division of the National Endowment for the Arts has been supporting a major experiment in the use of portable video and cable TV as a means of studying and encouraging the active preservation of southern mountain folklore.

Jointly sponsored by Broadside Video and the Sociology/Anthropology Department of East Tennessee State University of Johnson City, Tennessee, the Southern Appalachian Video Ethnography Series (SAVES) project aims to involve undergraduate students in the production of video documentaries dealing with diverse aspects of their region's folk culture, including traditional instrumental music, song, dance, story-telling, crafts, subsistence techniques, and religion. These tapes being used in classrooms as well as to local audiences in upper East Tennessee and southwest Virginia via cable.

Most folklorists and anthropologists have just started to become aware of the potential of portable videotape as a research and teaching tool. Although photography and film were mentioned only in passing, portable video was still too new and untested to be seriously considered by our professors. Our training in fieldwork methods concentrated almost exclusively on sound recording.

I was first awakened to the possibilities of portable videotape as a collecting and classroom tool at a conference on Appalachian education held at the Highlander Center in New Market, Tennessee during the early spring of 1973. Ted Carpenter, a former VISTA volunteer who had branched off into experimenting with portable video in the coal-mining counties of the Tennessee Cumberlands, showed excerpts from several of his tapes. I was excited to learn that he would shortly be coming to Johnson City to set up a public access video center. Almost immediately I borrowed a portapak and tapes from Broadside and



Author (with microphone) interviews Appalachian dollmaker.

began videotaping some of the traditional musicians in my rural neighborhood, and also encouraged my students to produce their own tapes. One student undertook a video essay on the growth of commercial country music in nearby Bristol; another recorded interviews and performances with several well known musicians in the Blue Ridge counties of Virginia and North Carolina, and also began a study of step dancing; another student worked with an excellent traditional storyteller in her home town.

The most spectacular project to emerge from our initial involvement with Broadside was carried out by a student named Wayne Barrett. During the spring of 1973 several members of the Church of God In Jesus' Name near Newport in Cocke County, Tennessee were bitten and killed by rattlesnakes during services. This resulted in an immediate confrontation between the church and the Tennessee courts, which was heightened by an influx of network TV news people. Wayne felt that the mass media coverage of this church and its unusual

practices was shallow and biased, and so he decided to attempt to study their belief system from their own perspective with the aid of the portapak. At first the church elders were suspicious of Wayne's motives, but after talking with him and seeking divine guidance through prayer, they decided to cooperate with him. Wayne visited the church regularly over the course of the following weeks, taping interviews and services.

Not only were Wayne and the other students actively engaging in fieldwork and developing a professional orientation to folklore and anthropology through their work with portable video, but their tapes were also being incorporated into classroom discussions, arousing the attention and involvement of other students. A learning situation was being created in which students were taking on an active role in determining the content and direction of their course work and using each others' projects and experiences as a basis for continuing research.

After one of my early tapes was favorably received at the Conference on Visual Anthropology held at Temple University in

Philadelphia, Alan Jabbour, a fellow student of rural white American instrumental music who had been head of the Library of Congress' Archive of Folk Song, became actively interested in our work. Shortly after being appointed director of NEA's newly established Special Projects Division, he came to Johnson City to talk with Ted Carpenter and me.

Out of this meeting came the idea of seeking NEA funding to continue and expand the work that we had done during the previous year. I was released from part of my course load and instituted a formal course in anthropological fieldwork methods including training in the use of the portapak. We tied into a new cooperative work/study program at ETSU under which students could receive academic credit and a salary while working at a full-time job. Thus students who demonstrated outstanding interest and aptitude in the fieldwork course could then be tapped for assistantships, be given the opportunity to completely devote themselves to developing their skills as anthropologists and videomakers.

In Sept. 1974 Southern Appalachian Video Ethnography Series project was officially launched with Bob Williams, as our first student. We began transferring Broadside's folklore collection into a separate SAVES library. Bob took on the task of teaching other students how to shoot and edit videotape, and they in turn began to teach others. I was pleased to see this pattern of students teaching other students, which had emerged at the start of our collaboration with Broadside, expanding in this way, and it was also gratifying to see how rapidly the documentary and technical quality of our tapes began to improve.

Orders for copies of our tapes started to come in from schools and universities in the Southern Appalachian region and elsewhere, and we also began to cablecast SAVES material on the regional cable network served by Broadside as a regular weekly series called "High Country". We began tape exchanges with anthropologists and folklorists working in other culture areas, such as Scotland and Zambia.

It is hard to objectively evaluate the SAVES project at the end of its first year. We have had the opportunity to explore some of the dimensions of the portable videotape medium in the field, the classroom, the studio and the community cable system, and a creative environment has been established within which students have been able to work with modern communications technology while producing documentaries providing themselves and others with greater insight into their region's cultural heritage.

Note: A brochure listing and describing tapes in the SAVES collection is available upon request to all interested parties. Tapes may be obtained through purchase or exchange. SAVES, c/o BROADSIDE VIDEO, Elm & Millard Sts., Johnson City, TN. 37601. [615/926-8191]

VIDEO PENPALS

By Theresa Mack

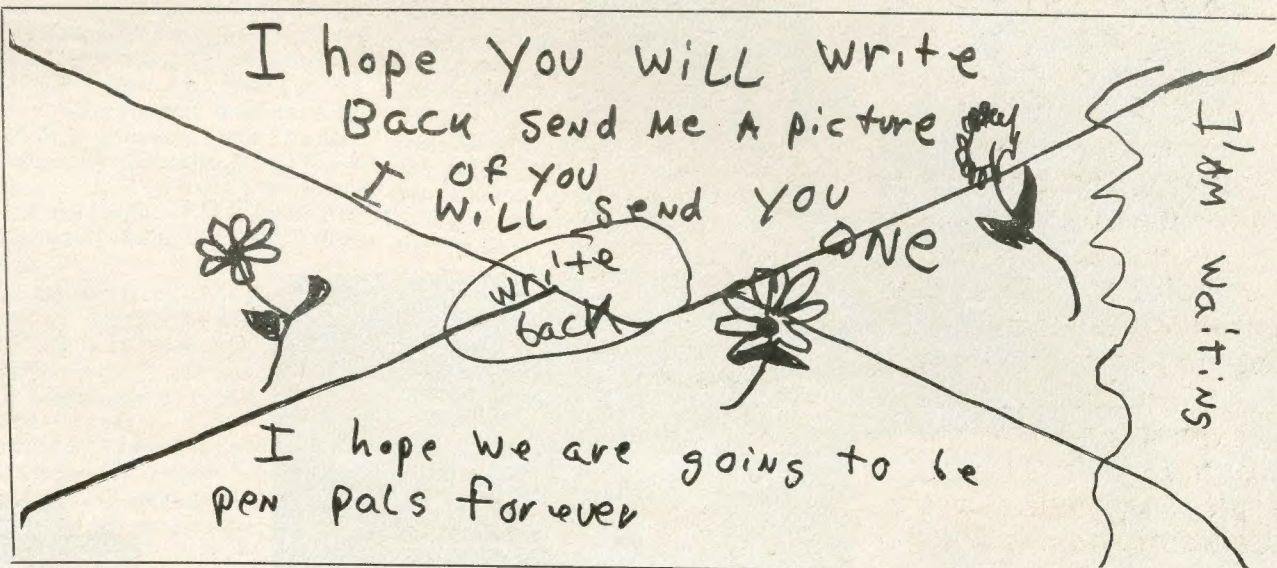
During the '74-'75 school year, Susan Presson's fifth grade class in Sanders-Clyde Elementary School in Charleston, S.C. exchanged videotapes regularly with Lois Betts' fifth-sixth grade class at P.S. 75 in NYC.

Each class divided itself into small groups and one group at a time worked on making a 20 minute tape which was mailed off every 6 or 8 weeks to the penpal class.

The making of each tape involved planning and organization. Often, as the kids prepared to go out shooting, they made notes for themselves on topic-ideas and possible interview questions. Sometimes they made storyboards detailing what they wanted to include in their tape and how they wanted to shoot it.

After two or three shooting sessions, the group would view their tapes to decide how to edit them. They wrote up logs, descriptions and evaluations of each shot. Then by referring to their logs the children wrote their editing scripts.

If you are interested in teaming up with a video penpal, try writing State Arts Councils for names of schools and teachers using video. Or you might meet someone at a conference or workshop you'd enjoy exchanging with. Here are a few interested organizations: Louisville Communications Center, 125 Cagle St, Louisville, MS. 39339; The Communications Center 105 North Mulberry, Elizabethtown, Ky. 42701; Vermont Council on the Arts 136 State St, Montpelier, Vt. 05602.



We encouraged the kids to focus on the personal and familiar, and so, many of their tapes dealt with their own neighborhoods, pastimes, concerns and experiences. We felt that exploring the familiar with video would give the tapemakers a greater consciousness of their own environment, and the tapeviewers a feeling for life in their penpals' city.

Knowing that there was someone waiting to see their tapes added excitement and meaning to each group's production. Interesting interviews, clear narration, and good camera work became more important than ever to the kids since they knew that their tapes would be watched closely by children in another city. The letters they exchanged were their main form of feedback about the tapes they received and a way to make more personal and individual contacts than the videotapes allowed.

The kids' end-of-year evaluations of the project showed that they really enjoyed and valued their video experience.

Making their own videotapes was unquestionably a popular activity, but viewing each others' tapes was more difficult, and some kids didn't like it at all.

It's always a temptation, even for people who make videotapes, to judge someone else's tapes according to slick television standards. And since the penpal tapes dealt with everyday life in a straightforward manner, with little comedy, drama, or sensationalism, the kids were easily bored when they watched each others' tapes. Perhaps the next step in the exchange - if the school year hadn't ended - would have been more honest, direct reactions and critiques of each others' tapes, as a way of learning more about each other and more about making good videotapes.

Self-image video work teaches teachers

By Joan Goldsmith

Most of us are blind to ourselves. We are in need of experiences which will provide us with a sense of who we are in present time and space. Our mirrors—parents, teachers and peers—offer us distorted reflections. Our chances for self-discovery are rare. For the past two years I have been seeking reliable mirrors. My search has been

conducted through a seminar I offer for prospective teachers at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. The course encourages the participants to come to terms with the experiences they have had while growing up in their families. In exploring their pasts, participants have had to face the impact their early lives have had on their life in the present.

It is in this group that I have found a need to provide experiences which will clarify and strengthen the identities of the participants as separate and distinct selves living in the present reality. It is out of this need that I have turned to a videotape recording and feedback system. The work with video recording grew out of two years' experimentation with the medium in the family seminar. All of us need information about our physical image as it acts in reality, not as we see it in our mind's eye. We need a sense of the contrast between our inner feelings, known only to us, and our outer presentation of self, known to others.

And we are in need of opportunities which confirm the reality of our experiences, those we might otherwise deny or forget. Although there are several structures with the family seminar which are designed to meet these needs, none is more powerful than an encounter with self as it is presented on videotape.

From time to time I ask members of the family course to state their chronological age. I ask this to give them a point of contact on the time continuum of their own lives. So often we act on the basis of distorted image of our own age and of the amount of real time passing between events. A thirty-three-year-old woman in the family course wrote to her parents about her own time confusion:

In the several spring months before my thirty-third birthday, I have been thinking more deeply than usual about the course of my life, my past, my present, my future...I still basically see myself as a child in the world, expecting others to be right and strong and me to be wrong and inadequate. I spend much of my time in social situations trying to conceal what I consider to be my insecurity and my emptiness...What troubles me is that

no matter what my achievements are, I still feel that they are insignificant, because I feel insignificant and inferior, as a child does in a world inhabited by superior and successful grown-ups...

For prospective teachers the confusion between the age they feel they are and the age they are in real time has consequences for the classroom. "I think of myself as a kid, maybe 16 or 17. I guess I dress that way too. But when I was first videotaped in front of the class I realized I was on the other side of the desk from the other kids...I didn't feel like a woman, but there I was - teacher..." This sort of concrete feedback by television is useful in helping student teachers confront the Questions: Do I want to act as an adult? Do I want to give up my image of myself as a kid? If so Why do I see myself as a child? And how can I accept myself as an adult?

Members of the course then probe their reluctance to act as adults before they are forced to be adult by the demands of teaching. The objectivity of the television feedback and the power of seeing oneself from a distance allows one to deal with the issues of growing up, aging, and death.

The realities of our bodies, functioning in space is also confused. We are often unaware that we have a physical reality as well as an intellectual or emotional reality. We may have ignored the evidence of our physical selves because it was displeasing to us. Our education may have taught us "mind over matter," providing no rewards for our body knowledge. We may have deep and frightening reasons for denying our physical reality. One such reason came to light when we videotaped the group on the first day of the family course last year.

Harry's father died 12 years ago. He was an only son whose mother tried desperately to make Harry fill the loneliness she felt when her husband died. Outwardly, Harry is stone-faced and withdrawn. His stance is his protection from his grabbing mother and from this own guilt and loneliness. Harry seems to have killed all physical expression of himself. You almost feel he is not there. As we began the playback of the videotape of the group to itself, Harry became more slumped in his chair. He covered a good part of his face with his hand. He said nothing after seeing himself. However, the next day when he came to my office to explain why he would be dropping the course he told me his reaction to seeing the tape.

"As the camera moved around the group and came toward me, I was sure I would find nothing on the screen...I felt there would be no one there - just an empty chair...I didn't think I would see my face. Only a blank screen. I don't want to see myself. I don't want to know I'm here...I didn't like seeing myself."

Harry went on to say that he felt he had died at age 10 with his father. He does not want to be reborn - it is too painful. For a few moments he confronted the reality of his existence on the videotape and he chose not to accept it.

How do we know what we look like? I grew up with an image of Doris Day as womanhood. That must date me. In my own mind I carefully guarded myself against all evidence which delineated me from her. When the evidence came I had no way of accepting it. I wanted to believe I was actually the ideal and perfect me which I held in my mind.

One of the problems we all face is the task of accepting ourselves as we are rather than as we hope to be. My stake in maintaining my Hollywood image of myself kept me from developing my true strengths. Rather than creating a unique image which was me, I had to guard against myself to protect my fantasy. As we grow up we are constantly being told, "You look just like your mother." "He's the spitting image of..." and on and on. No wonder there is such a surprise when members of the family course first see themselves on the videotape.

For some people there is the initial recognition of others in themselves:

M. "I really don't like to hear my voice on tape. I don't object to pictures as much as the voice and I think it is because it sounds very much like my mother and the messages she communicated are not the messages I want to communicate."

S. The first step in claiming "what is mine as distinct from others" can be followed by videotaping M. and her mother as they talk together. They can contrast the reality of each as compared to the fantasy they have of each other and themselves.

For others there is surprise with the pleasure of seeing themselves:

T. "I had a very vain reaction to myself. I remember being very uncomfortable...but my reaction now (on seeing the videotape) was, 'You came across pretty well.' The thing that surprised me, I guess, is that I have a feeling that my self-consciousness shows. As a matter of fact it didn't. I really felt that I was the most unself-conscious person. I just thought I looked more relaxed than other people."

For some members of the course the feedback was not so pleasing. However, accepting the reality of one's appearance can allow one to change what is distasteful. Mike's first reaction to seeing himself was:

"I looked so straight. I couldn't believe it. I realized I've worn suits and ties for years - almost compulsively...I never felt I was straight, but when I saw myself I realized I've always looked that way...very clean, short hair, suit and tie...I've been thinking about what's masculine and feminine since I was a kid. I felt I was built like a woman and I was afraid to look like one, so suits and ties all the time..."

Marcie is a 19-year-old runaway to the East Village in New York City who allowed herself to be interviewed about her experiences and to be recorded while talking to her parents on the telephone. The talk with her parents is difficult to listen to. It reminds us of our lost childhood and our unmet longings for love. In the family course, and in workshops with teachers, I have often played the recording of Marcie and videotaped the group that is listening.

"Oh, Momma, listen, listen. I love you, you know and I love you but you know how it is with Jeanie. I can't get along with her. It's fighting all the time. And I just don't want it. You know she treats me like I'm not even alive...I don't want all that fighting at home...And I really hate being upset all the time and these people in the (East) Village are all my little family now...We all love each other...Mother, I love you. No, I'm not lost...Mother, I love you very much. And it's not that I'll be gone forever. I won't be gone forever. I don't hate you, either of you. I love you very much. You know when I call I want to talk to you and I want to talk to Daddy. But Daddy never wants to talk to me. He doesn't really love me..."

When we replay the videotape many times the listeners are surprised to find how little they show of what they feel for Marcie. In one group of school teachers and administrators an assistant superintendent of the city system expressed his surprise:

"I didn't know I showed so little of what I felt...I was moved by the girl, but nothing came out. I showed nothing on my face. I wonder if that is all my kids see. I looked stern. I felt very sad..."

Much professional training is designed to help us build a detached mask which cannot be penetrated by clients or students. Once the gap is widened between what we feel as teachers and what we present to our students there is little chance for us to empathize with the people with whom we work. One prospective teacher described the gap in the following way:

"When I'm on the spot talking I always think that my voice is reaching a pitch...And your voice, it contracts inside and you can feel this pressure and this desperate talking. But on videotape I look calm. And when I've been videotaped teaching, you're so nervous, trying to say relevant things and you're on the spot

all the time, but it's amazing what defenses you've become adapted to and on the outside you look calm..."

The gap between our inner feelings and our outer presentation of self can isolate us from others. We assume they know how we feel and should respond to our needs when we have kept hidden our most important feelings. When another does not read our mind and act accordingly, we feel hurt and rejected. How sad it is to never know we have not shared what is needed by the other to reach out to us. One young woman reacted in this way to seeing how much of herself she presented to the group:

"What I conveyed to you was really a lot less than what I would have liked to have conveyed. There was nothing said...I thought I said so much more. I wanted to say so much more. Also, I was thinking what a limited means of communication language is, extremely limited..."

The videotape feedback of what we express is sometimes the only way we can learn what information we are making available to others. Quite often we don't know ourselves what we are feeling. A sequence such as the following can help an individual become more authentic to himself and to others.

A young man sees himself listening to the tape of Marcie's conversation with her mother.

"I really look tense...but around the eyes I'm sad. My eyes look filmy to me. I think maybe I was a little sad..." And later, "...uh, there's something I want to say to the group. I've been sitting here feeling very sad. The tape made me sad. I don't think I felt it until just now..."

A video recording and feedback system makes possible a confirmation of reality. The slice of reality held on the tape and replayed the actor allows him to confront his action. So often we make a presentation we regret.

As the replay of the tape begins, there is that terrible slip, that annoying "ya know" or that habit of pulling hair, but we must accept it.

For a few moments he confronted the reality of his existence on the videotape and he chose not to accept it.

Anger is one of the most frightening emotions to those who have grown up in middle class American culture. To have our anger recorded and confirmed for us is difficult to bear. We have been taught to feel ashamed of our angry feelings. We share the fear that if we reveal our anger to others there will be a terrible price to pay. So we try to cover it with humor, soften it with a smile or talk it away.

The members of the family course had a dramatic confrontation with the reality of the anger of one of its members.

M., a forty-five-year-old married woman with four children, presented to the seminar a chronicle of two days in her life. In the process of her presentation she referred to herself as a chattel and to the fact that she was resigned to that self image. Her chronology was a listing of one task after another, which she compulsively performed to meet what she believed to be the needs and expectations of her husband, children and parents.

S., a younger woman in the course, who had been recently married, became furious with the thought that M.'s fate might be her own. She remembered her own mother, "bent over the ironing board, glassy eyed, and lost to herself." As she began to feel trapped in a destiny which would repeat her mother's life, she became more and more angry, began shouting at M. and finally cried.

The impact of S.'s anger was powerful. Most people in the class were forced to struggle with their own anger and fears for themselves and for S. At the next class meeting, S. and the rest of the class were embarrassed about the incident and expressed discomfort.

I asked S., "Did you have any particular fears about class today?" Her reply was, "I don't know. Immediately after class I thought to myself that I made a fool of myself, and that I didn't want to face anybody. And then I thought, that was just an initial thing, that was stupid, and that I wanted to talk about it again. I think I trust everyone here enough to come back and have to feel like I have to crawl over into a corner and just withdraw because I've gone out too far."

Fortunately, S. did return. We had videotaped the previous class and were able to relive and reexamine her outburst of anger. Although she trusted the group enough to return, she still felt that her display of anger was cause for embarrassment. The replay of the tape enabled her to learn how she expressed her anger. And she was able to accept and live with the fact that she had been angry, that she had forcefully expressed that anger, and that she had survived.

After a replay of the tape during which several class members connected with their own anger and sadness, I asked S., "How did you feel, hearing it again?"

She replied: "In the first part, I felt very vulnerable, like, I had made a fool of myself on tape and I didn't want it to be brought up again. I didn't realize that I had been so vehement. I thought it was very rational. I was shocked when I heard myself in this very loud, really harsh, voice say what I thought."

One of the reasons I don't want this brought up again is that I thought that was like a momentary lapse of sanity or going into something irrational and it was something I had worked out and I was happy now and I didn't need to go back. The real reason was that I was afraid to go back and look at it again."

Others, in watching the tape, identified their own feelings as S.'s anger began to develop. As they watched the replay they knew what was coming, and they braced themselves. "I felt a lot of apprehension because I knew what was coming and I kept waiting for it. I thought it was going to happen a lot sooner than it did."

Use of a recording and playback system in this way provides evidence that a frightening event or feeling actually did happen and that the participants could survive the experience and the anxiety surrounding it. S. did not go up in a puff of smoke. She was not insane. Divine retribution did not punish her for her outburst. And no one else in the group crumbled.

In a society where the distinction between reality and fantasy is blurred so often it becomes a constant struggle to maintain a hold on the reality of our lives. From the present reports on Vietnam to the myth of normal life presented by the mass media, we are fed material which denies our own experience.

If each of us does not take up the difficult task of separating reality from fantasy in our lives, we will be lost to ourselves and each other. I have found the use of video feedback important in providing the information which is necessary to make the distinction between reality and fantasy.

There are difficulties in its use. For the teacher who videotapes a group there is the fear that the group will be angry and fight the experience. For each person in the group there are great personal fears and doubts when confronting oneself. But the learnings and growth which are available when the video system is used are so important and desirable that the risks seem worth taking.

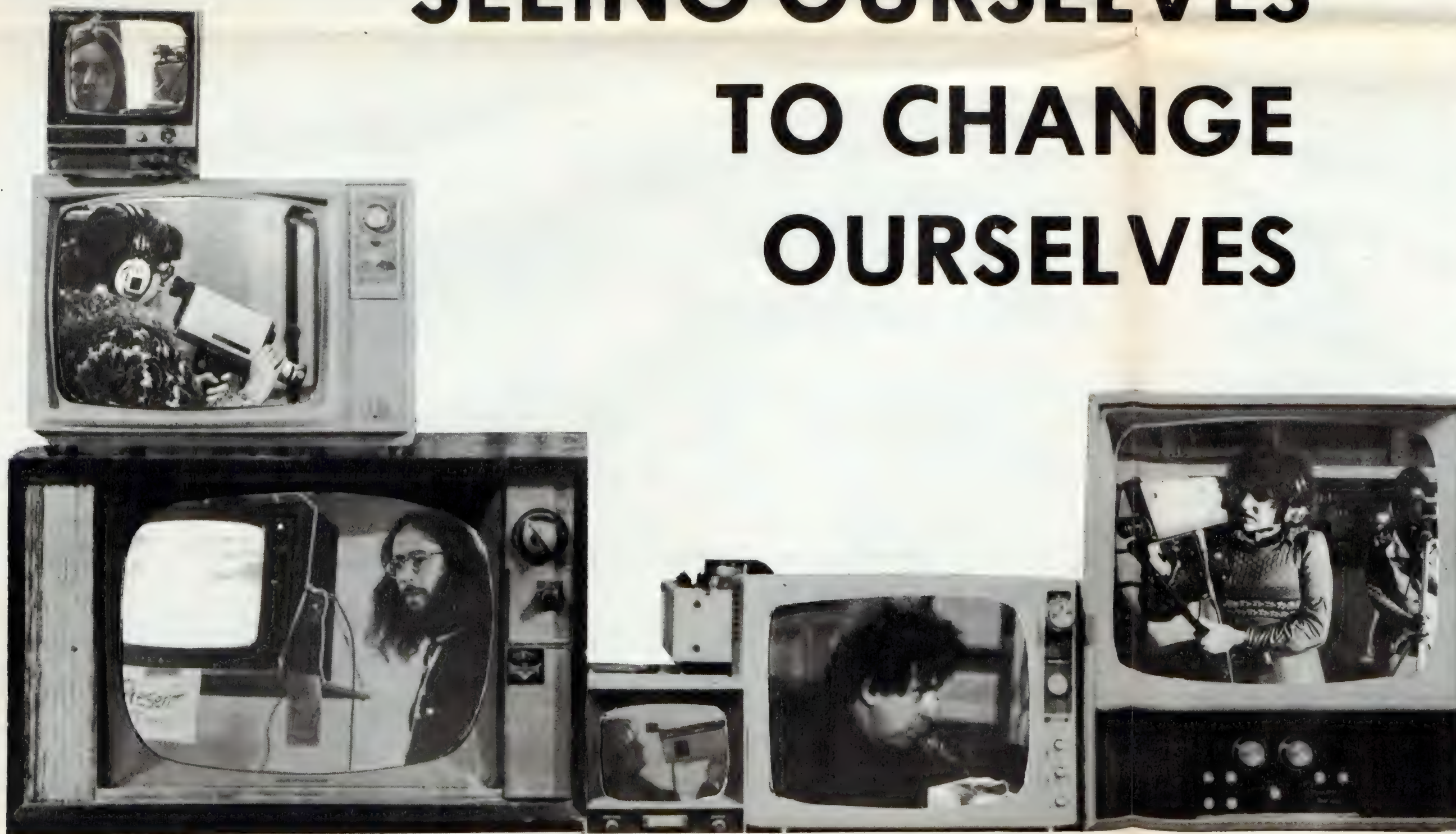


Photo montage: Maurice Jacobson



Photo: Trip Gruver

CBS is quietly setting up a new division to produce educational TV programming for the Public Broadcasting System. Modelled somewhat after the Children's Television Workshop (producers of Sesame Street, Feeling Good, et. al.), lawyers and programmers are laying the groundwork for what one participant calls "a new profit center." CBS wants to keep the new project so quiet that it's set up offices for the staff outside "Black Rock", the corporate headquarters in New York. CTW, incidentally, grossed something in the neighborhood of \$11 million last year, \$6 million of it from non-governmental sources."

The first commercial video disc players will be on the market by this time next year, says a practical and comprehensive survey of the disc player war by **Business Week** magazine. It'll be the RCA (electrical pick-up) system. MCA-Phillips system (with the more sophisticated optical pick-up) is slated for a region-by-region rollout beginning May 1977, with full national distribution in effect by the beginning of 1978. The RCA system will be priced at around \$400 with an initial catalogue of 500 titles priced at \$12-15 each. The RCA catalogue will be about 50% movies, the rest musical and theatrical performances and how-to shows. MCA-Phillips' will sell for between \$500 and \$600 with their 500 title catalogue priced at about \$10 per program.

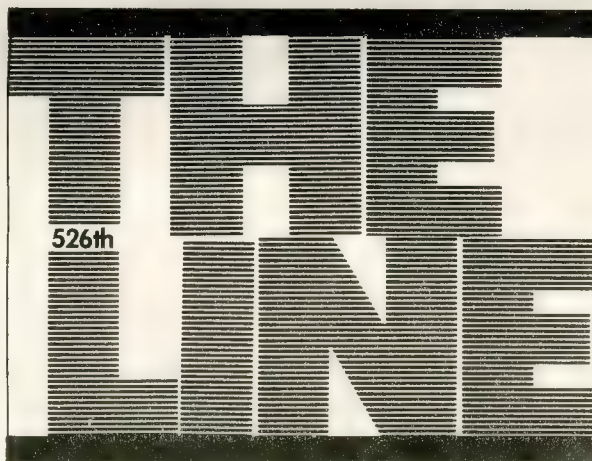
MCA-Phillips' biggest headache now is the mass production of lasers used to "read" the disc. Lasers have never been built on a production line before. And the cooperating companies will "be shipping \$200 with every player" at first. Cost of the system to the company will more likely be in the \$800 range, but the companies are willing to "force feed the market" to get it moving.

Panasonic—the Japanese do-it-cheaper company will opt for one system or the other by mid-1976, **Business Week** says.

Network TV profits were announced with the somewhat predictable rings of up, up, up. Total revenues were \$1.8 billion for all three webs making the average profit margin around 12.5% (4—6% is the average profit margin of most other businesses in the U.S.) CBS pre-tax profits were \$110 million (17% profit margin), NBC \$66 million (11%), and ABC \$49 million (9%).

In other corporate video news, **Sony Corp.** and **Eastern Airlines** have also set up new video training divisions within their companies. The aim is to teach other corporations (for a fee) how best to use that video equipment that's been sitting in the janitor's closet since the time when "just everybody" was buying it.

The **Transcendental Meditation** empire of the Maharishi Mahesh Yogi expands into television when KSCI-TV Los Angeles (channel 18) begins broadcasting this fall. KSCI (for Science of Creative Intelligence) is wholly owned by the TM establishment's umbrella corporation World Plan Executive Council-US. Some 56 hours of weekly programming are planned at the start. Programming presumably will be supplied by World Plan TV Productions owned by the same corporation which has been making videotape TM courses for a number of years now from its Livingston Manor, NY headquarters. World Plan TV distributes more than 1,000 hour-long tapes each month to TM centers around the world. A TM TV network of seven stations is envisioned by 1980, with applications for licenses already pending in Washington, DC and Buffalo.



British Prime Minister **Harold Wilson** has endorsed the idea of broadcasting the daily deliberations of the House of Commons. A bill is now pending before Commons which would authorize radio broadcasts from its floor. If approved—and observers see it as likely—broadcasting will begin early next year.

A similar measure still languishes in the US congress. Some members have introduced bills which would allow for a one-year test of TV coverage of live debates. None of the powerful leaders in Congress though have yet scheduled hearings on the idea and we suggest you not make any heavy bets on its passage this term.

John P. Witherspoon, VP of KCET-TV Los Angeles, has been named president of the **Public Service Satellite Consortium**. Witherspoon, a former CPB official, will be able to guide and regulate most public service uses of communication satellites from his new position. The consortium operates on grants from HEW and NASA.

CPB has created the new executive post of director of corporate relations—that is, in plain "Anglais", a corporate money solicitor. The job's been filled with one Peter Levathes, formerly of Young & Rubicam. His first job will be to collect \$6 million from corporate coffers to match the same amount CPB set aside for new PBS shows. He'll also be out scouring for non-broadcast money to rejuvenate the ailing joint PBS-Natl. Endowment for the Arts filmmaker-in-residence program, as well as to continue research and minority training efforts.

House Communications Committee aides are meeting with citizen groups to get input on yet another version of the **cable bill**; this one, unlike long-dormant OTP version, would put cable on an equal footing with broadcasting. There's bound to be a battle ahead.

"A novel idea" is how FCCer Steve Crain describes plans to move the **California regional meeting** between Commission and the public from a live forum to a call-in format on KTVU-TV Nov. 20. Oakland Media organizer Bill Hartmann calls it something else, indicating that Bay Area media activists may protest the move, that might be to remove pressure from the FCC, who would be able to re-screen calls from home viewers more easily than in a live audience format.

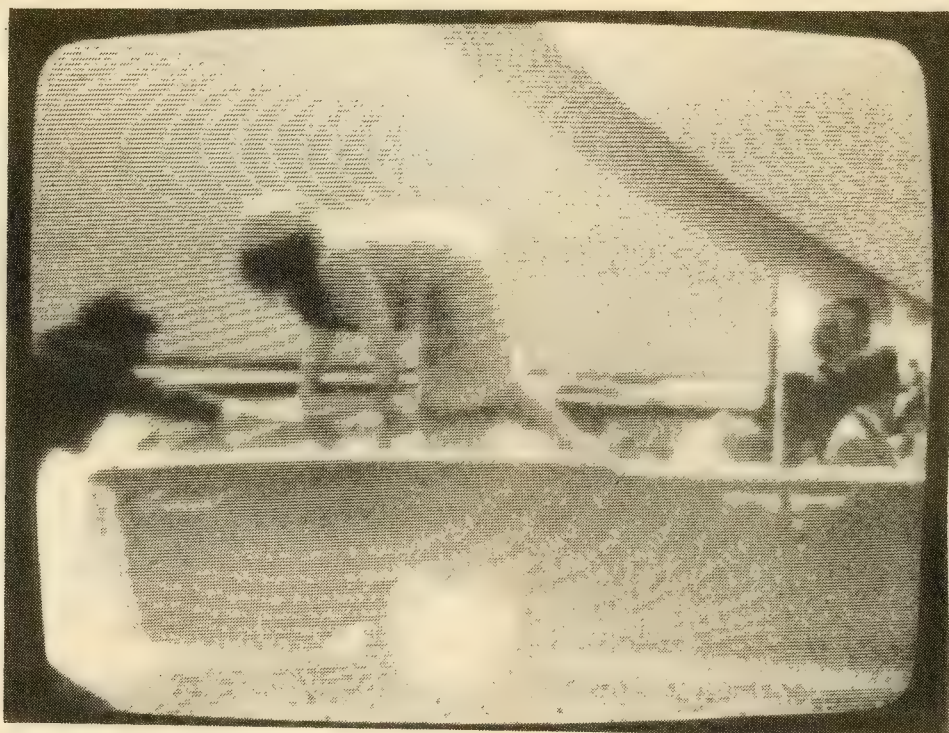
New and wonderful notes. JVC is about to unveil its new color, two-camera switcher for remote locations. The new switcher will allow two separate video cameras to be fed into a single VTR...Zenith is in a footrace with several Japanese manufacturers to develop a flat, large-screen, wall TV...Hitachi has announced it will enter the video disc competition with a slow-moving, (6 rpm) holographic system... "Chip" technology, which brought us those mini-calculators and, more recently, all solid-state miniature TV cameras, may also make possible a small, low-priced time base corrector. Fairchild Camera and Instrument Co. is experimenting...Ciron Inc. is now marketing a 2x2x8 inch color TV camera weighing in at 20 ounces.

Media meanderings. A study/projection by the Conquest Corp. says CATV revenues, currently standing at about \$544 million annually, will grow to near \$4.3 billion by 1985...While some 85% of all US adults watch TV, only about 69% read newspapers, the research firm of R.H. Buskin found recently. In 1970, TV viewership had only a 3% lead on print. In the last five years, though, the tube has picked up 19 million new converts, newspapers only about a million...Another Buskin survey ranks America's leading TV faces. Number one is old iron-ass himself, Walter Cronkite, Johnny Carson second, the pate (not the face) of Telly Savalas third. From there, US faves, in descending order, go: Redd Foxx, Peter Falk, Mike Douglas and Carol Burnett.



"The Eternal Frame" is a documented re-enactment of the assassination of John F. Kennedy produced jointly by Ant Farm and T.R. Uthco of San Francisco.

The production was shot on location in Dallas with the artists portraying JFK, Jackie [in a re-creation of the familiar pink dress], Nellie Connally, John Connally, Secret Service men, and the entire presidential entourage. The



Photos: Jules Backus

re-enactment is based on the Zapruder film and documented by the producers in color video, super-8 film, color slides, and polaroids. Reactions by tourists visiting Dealey Plaza are powerful verite moments that compliment the sense of time warped reality of the assassination scenes. Editing of the tape, film, and slides is now in progress with screenings scheduled for November 22 in San Francisco and New York. For further information contact: The Eternal Frame, Box 77082, San Francisco, CA., 94107.

NEWS FROM THE VIDEOSPHERE

Videoarts One-woman effort puts video in SF arts fest

By Thomas Kent

A

As far as I know, San Francisco is the only city in the country, perhaps the world, whose annual municipally-sponsored art festival includes video.

Tucked away over there in a corner of the city's Civic Center Plaza, right next to the elevator servicing the underground parking garage, one could find, any day from September 24 through September 28, an ungainly wooden enclosure shaped like a fat fourleaf clover, about the size of the men's gymnasium shower room. A sign near the entrance to the enclosure identified it as the "Moebius Video Pavilion"; inside, a central cluster of VTRs fed black-and-white and color video to each of the pavilion's four viewing areas, and thence onto the retinas of the curious, the intrigued, the mildly interested and the merely drunk—all details of a crowd, anarchic as white noise, that swirled in one door of the pavilion and out the other during the five days it was in business.

Before anyone gets crazy, let me point out that the inclusion of video in San Francisco's Art Festival owes nothing to the perspicacity of the city's Art Commission, owes everything to the energy, simple competence and, at times, almost inexplicable determination of a woman named Bonnie Engel.

Engel operates from behind a non-profit corporate front known as The Public Eye. Sometime in the middle of last summer, she decided the art festival should encompass video as well as the other arts and crafts and,

with virtually no resources, hustled that idea into reality. This year, graced with a budget which if converted into dimes would equal approximately enough metal to fill up your ear, she's repeated the act. I don't mean to imply Engel does it all single-handedly; one of her major talents, in fact, is the ability to charm, cajole, bribe, seduce, possibly threaten otherwise sensible people into donating large blocks of time and energy to the cause.

Nearly all the equipment in the pavilion, for example, was loaned by local video hardware suppliers in return for ads in the program guide, which was itself designed, laid-out, and pasted-up *gratis* by a graphic designer from Marin County. All told, the services of a couple dozen "video volunteers" were consumed putting the Moebius Video Pavilion together. Let all those people rest easy with the knowledge they will surely go to heaven. Sooner or later.

As to the tapes themselves, the actual video:

Sixty-five individuals and groups submitted 80 entries or pieces, ranging in length from one minute to 60 minutes and pretty much covering all known genres of video from straight wander-the-streets-with-the-camera-on portapak verite through community action/public access programming to the high art of Terry Fox's elegant and shamanistic *Children's Tapes*. Similarly, the quality of the entries touched all the bases between work good enough for anybody's museum to work I can only charitably describe as video eyewash. There were the usual dollops of simple and processed feedback, colorized and synthesized abstraction, plus an unintentionally hilarious, and very slickly produced PR documentary about the founder of a bible

college in Oakland, California whose great dream is meeting David Ben-Gurion and planting a forest in the Negev Desert.

All this tape was looked at by a jury of three: David Ross, Deputy Director and Video Curator of the Long Beach Museum of Art; Suki Wilder, video artist, former member of Video Free America and one of the makers of *The Continuing Saga of Carol and Ferd*; and myself. The judges had three prizes to award: the California Video Resources Project/San Francisco Public Library Purchase Prize (to simplify—CVRP buys a copy of the tape from the artist for \$125); The Louise Riskin Prize from the San Francisco Art Commission, \$250 to be awarded in a lump or apportioned any way the jurors saw fit; and \$200 worth of editing time or other services donated by General Electronics in Oakland. After 25 hours in "video bondage" (Engel's term), interrupted only by a little sleep, a little food and frequent recourse to illicit substances, the jury divided up the loot as follows:

- CVRP/S.F. Public Library Purchase Prize to Mon Jong Gok and Mike Haller for *Fuzy Wuz He*, a devastating and precisely-focused satire on video art and video artists and especially the techno-mysterioso smoke-screens of jargon in which far too many video artists obscure their work.

- Editing time or services from General Electronics to Darryl Sapien for *Splitman Bisects The Pacific*, a documentary of a performance piece of the same title which occurred in the ruins of the Sutro Baths on the edge of the Pacific Ocean, and out into the Ocean, one dark, foggy night last year.

From the Louise Riskin Prize:

- \$50 to Joel Hermann and Craig Schiller

for their documentary of the San Francisco Museum of Art's now-famous Artist's 'Soapbox Derby.'

- \$50 to Terry Fox for *Children's Tapes*.
- \$50 to Joel Glassman for *Dreams*, a brooding, eerie and thoroughly masterful example of a rapidly-emerging style I'm just dippy enough to label "gothic video."

- \$25 to Joel Hermann for *While I Was Waiting*, a video meditation on stasis and distance and suicide.

- \$25 to Alan Bloom for *Virginia*, the record of an intense and uneasy confrontation between a domineering and supposedly omnipotent interrogator and a marvelously strong and calm 68 year old woman.

- \$25 to Max Almy and Barbara Hammer for *Superdyke Meets Madam X*, a record of the two women's love affair and attempts to communicate their desperation, fears and needs as seen by both of them, from the eye of cyclone.

- \$25 to Craig Schiller for *Masks And Other Impressions*, a collection of short, tightly-edited pieces, the finest of which was "Improvisations To Music", with actress Andrea Kessler responding to selections of drippy, tin-pan-alley music she's never heard before.

In addition to the above prizes, the San Francisco Museum of Art has promised a show at the Museum to the winners, the details of which have yet to be worked out.

At this point, it's anybody's guess whether next year's San Francisco Art Festival will include video or not. The Art Commission, which has responsibility for the festival, seems determined to view video art as an orphan form whose presence in the festival will be tolerated on the condition that somebody else does all the work involved in putting it there. While Bonnie Engel and her band of video volunteers obviously test out on the nutty side of normal, it's highly doubtful they're whacked enough to crank themselves through the same tired meatgrinder three years in a row. It's your classic one-way street involving, on the one hand, artists with hardly any money and no power; and on the other hand, social institutions afflicted with imaginative lockjaw and backed-up with more money and power than is good for them or us. The best take on the whole situation comes from The Amazing Rhythm Aces: it's a "third rate romance, low rent rendezvous." Indeed.

Thomas Kent is video editor of *Art Week* magazine and writes about art for the *City of San Francisco* magazine.

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International video arrives in Berlin

Film fest expands into television

By Dimitri Devyatkin

In West Berlin, from June 29 to July 6, a major showing of video tapes was presented by the International Forum of Young cinema, as part of the Berlin Film Festival. Since the development of the use of video in Europe seems to be at least five years behind the United States, the Forum program was a significant landmark, bringing together video pioneers for the first time, from many cities of the Federal Republic of Germany, as well as representatives from France, England, and myself from the USA.

The video program was presented in a large hall in the Akademie der Künste, (Academy of Arts) a large museum surrounded by a lush park. Each day's activities began at noon with a new presentation. Representatives of different video groups each had a turn to set up a video environment, to show their tapes and carry on discussions with the gathered populace.

The first day, the presentation was by the group TELEWISSEN, from the city of Darmstadt, not far from Frankfurt. TELEWISSEN has produced ten programs which have been broadcast all over Germany. All of their programs are produced on Sony portapaks, and are edited onto IVC one inch, using the portapaks as playback decks, with a sync restorer, (a proc-amp). The subjects of their tapes are primarily social/political issues, and interviews with the people involved. The TELEWISSEN people get the people in the streets to make their own content. They also showed a tape of Videomusik, modern ballads that sounded almost Medieval, being performed in a cafe. The camera work, the image quality, and the sound, were consistently good.

On the second day, tapes and an environment were presented by the group VIDEO AUDIO MEDIA, from Berlin. They are also known as V.A.M. Future Kids, and their emblem is a marijuana plant. The leaders of the group are Michael Geissler and Tillman Romer, both of whom I met. Their tapes are much more "art" oriented than TELEWISSEN's, surrealist, tending toward glitter infatuation.

On the third day, the presentation was by a group from London, INTER-ACTION. A large collective, with many forms of involvement in the working class communities around London, Inter-Action uses video basically as an organizing tool. They came to Berlin in their huge red Mercedes bus, which is outfitted as a super media van, with video, 16mm projector, sound system and mimeograph machine. The bus travels to market-places, housing complexes, playgrounds, and other community meeting places. The Inter-Action crew members show the people how to make their own video tapes, which are shown on a three monitor matrix. Topics of the tapes vary from issues common to any city, to specific problems effecting only a few neighborhoods. The technical quality of the tapes was not very good, though that didn't seem to be of much concern - process was the main point. They did not intend to make tapes to be distributed, but only for the sake of the immediate consciousness raising.

The author in the Soviet Union

On the fourth day, the program was entitled: "Experiences of a Video Maker in the USA and the USSR" Dimitri Devyatkin, New York. I showed tapes I had made in the Soviet Union: *Scene in Russia*, and *Suggestopedia. A Science of Learning*. Also I showed tapes of performances by the Taganka Theatre in Moscow, and by Bertolt Brecht's theatre, The Berliner Ensemble, from the other Berlin, G.D.R.

On the fifth day, Yvonne Lefebvre, of the Paris group VIDEO 00, presented tapes by VIDEO OUT, and LES CENT FLEURS (The Hundred Flowers). As is evident from the titles of the tapes, they were all concerning social/political events, and real people. The style is slow paced, with a lot of talking. Some of the tapes: *The Prostitutes of Lyon Speak* in which the prostitutes went on strike, and held a big meeting in a church; *The March of the*

Women of Cyprus; *Chronicles of the Anti-nuclear Struggle*; *The Immigrants Story* about the hungerstrikes of the foreign workers in France; *The Famine in Sahel* recorded in Upper Volta, Senegal, and Chad. Two other tapes that are in process of being edited are *Street Farmers* about a community in London that tries to harness alternate energy supplies, and preserve resources, and *Soldiers in Struggle* (or *the Discreet Charms of the Silent Majority*).

On the sixth day, the group TVideo Munchen/Berlin put on a show. As their name implies, members of the group live in both Munich and Berlin. Included in the show were tapes they had recorded with the Videofreex in Lansville, New York. Charly Roesch, from Munich, has established many links with North American video makers. Some of the tapes were: *Unser Fernsehen / People's Video* - Alternative Television in the USA and Canada *Das Fernsehen gehört uns*, *TV-Hearing Jetzt red i* Critique of Audience Participation in television.

On the seventh day's program was by video experimenters from the Institute for Theatre Sciences, part of the Free University in Berlin. Their work consisted of video taped rehearsals of the television play "*Der kleine schwarze Fisch*" (The Little Black Fish).

Berlin's video godfather

On the eighth and final day, the presentation was by the patriarch of video in Berlin, Klaus Ritter. An American by birth, he is a long time resident of Berlin, and one of the very first people to begin working with video there. He has long worked with an American standard portapak, which has caused great hardship. However, Klaus seems to have thrived on the distinction of being the only one. He continues to make his living as an architect, artist, and designer, and has done video work unsupported for many years.

Under the title of *BBW-Video*, Klaus Ritter, Berlin, these tapes were presented: *Gegen Profitisierung* (Against Profit Reorganization) meetings in Berlin's working class district-Schöneberg. *Gegen #218 "Kinder oder keine entscheiden wir alleine"* (Children or not, we decide ourselves!) *Amerikaner in Berlin-Interviews* with some of the many emigre Americans who have made Berlin their home.

On the final night of the Forum, there was a great party for all the video people, held in Klaus Ritter's storefront apartment. It spilled out into the street, and crowds gathered to watch the tapes.

US artists alternate with Europeans

Besides the eight daily programs described above, there were the continuous screenings of the tapes from Germany and England, alternating days with the show I'd organized from the US. Most of the German tapes were from the groups at the Forum. Particularly beautiful abstract tapes were shown by an Englishman, who lives in Munich, Brian Wood.

Video from America included the work of some 25 artists, among which are the best known in the country.

This video program was part of the International Forum of Young Cinema, an annual event, organized by the FREUNDE DER DEUTSCHEN KINEMATHEK (Friends of the GERMAN Cinema), one of the oldest film collectives in Germany. They run a regular cinema, ARSENAL, in downtown Berlin, where different classics are shown every day. Supported by the City of Berlin, and the Federal German Government, the Forum shows excellent films that are rarely seen anywhere. They are independently produced films from progressive and experimental filmmakers from all over the world. Though it exists also as only a side event to the gigantic Berlin Filmfestspiele, second only to Cannes as a commercial industry show-place, I think that the Forum is by far the more significant event.

"IMPROVEMENT SINCE 1960 INCLUDE LENS ZOOMING AND INSTANT VIDEO TAPE RECORDING LIKE THOSE USED IN SPORTS TELECASTS FOR INSTANT REPLAY OF THE ACTION. TODAY, MANY PEOPLE ARE VIDEO-TAPING THEIR OWN "HOME SHOWS," AND VACATION SIGHTS."



Optic Nerve on govt. arts money

Optic Nerve, a San Francisco video production group, has edited a 30-minute documentary about a neighborhood artists program sponsored through the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA).

The tape, entitled "Art Works," interviews artists, community members, municipal arts and manpower administrators, and others involved in this pilot San Francisco project, which put a large number of the city's out-of-work artists into creative jobs with federally supplied salaries.

The tape was financed by the National Endowment for the Arts Public Media Section, which will distribute the tape if the second phase of funding goes as intended. The tape is aimed primarily at other manpower and arts administrators around the country who want to know how such an experimental project might work.

The tape is mixed color and black-and-white, and is extremely well-edited. Further details are available from Optic Nerve, 141 10th Street, San Francisco. (415) 861-4385.

Barnyard video all-star show hits Woodstock

What happens when you put the Video freeks' Traveling Video Environment, Paul Ryan's inter-personal video processes, Walter Wright's synthesizer, a half-dozen monitors, and fifty or so video people in a barn for four days?

Well you get entertained, processed, somewhat informed, a bit overly barraged, and sometimes bored.

When Ken Marsh, Tobe Carey and the folds from Woodstock Community Video decided to have a video festival six or seven months ago they arranged for space in the Woodstock Co-operative Gallery, an old barn on the outskirts of town, they got some technical assistance money from the New York State Council of the Arts, they invited some "resident" video people to put on a presentation or two and solicited tapes from around the state of New York.

The tapes they got back were scheduled in alphabetical order running for 4 consecutive days. In retrospect spending time at the festival was very much like watching the New York Public Access channels. Some of the tapes were excellent, others definitely were not.

On the final day of the festival a panel called *Video: Where It's At and Going* took place. As a prelude the organizers edited together a representative sample of the content of the show. According to Ken Marsh an attempt was made to include an example of each of the video forms seen during the previous days. Included were scenes from Tom DeWitt's *This Is TV America*, a video documentary on our television viewing habits; Marsh's tape called *Baby*, a personal documentary on the birth of his and his wife Elaine's child; Paul Ryan's *Earthscope*, a process tape documenting a behavioral experiment in Triadic interaction; *Down in the Dumps*, a tape by Tobe Cary utilizing

continued on next page

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continued from previous page

documentary acting; and finally some synthesized video art by Walter Wright. It was this final category that was most in evidence during the festival and was the subject of much of the discussion that took place.

One could classify "videoart" as tape produced for its visual, aesthetic impact with emphasis on color, style, and form with a de-emphasis on informational content. Most of the videoart shown at the festival fell under this definition. It was produced with the use of colorizers, video synthesizers, and other high tech hardware, and it came primarily from three sources: The Center for Experimental Television, Binghamton, New York; Synapse, at the Newhouse School of Communications, Syracuse University; and the TV Lab at WNET, Channel 13, New York City.

During the final session a question was raised by women from the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston (which is also planning a video show of its own in October) whether people outside the video community care enough to come to a video festival. The question was valid because practically all those attending the Woodstock showing seemed to be working with video on some level. New York State is without argument the most abundant state in the country for video. The New York State Council of the Arts serves as the great well. With the largest arts council budget in the country at over 20 million dollars and an expressed interest in video its presence has been one of the key reasons why New York is the leader in video development that it is.

But because of this resource and because of the Council's obvious arts orientation it is a classic case of the tail wagging the dog. As Paul Ryan very accurately pointed out, because the "art money" was there a class of "professional videoartists" has developed just as there are recognized painters or sculptors. This situation has created a natural competition and consequently a more narrowly defined cynical view toward video. Most of the artists around the state have their own pre-occupations and is probably one of the reasons why there was such a specialized attendance.

Maurice Jacobsen

Art shorts

Electronic Arts Intermix (84 Fifth Ave, NY 10011 212-989-2316) has a new automated color videoscope editing system which will be hooked into existing equipment for availability to "qualified videoartists" under supervision and instruction of John Trayna. No charge for the services. They will send you an application blank and more information.

EAI also is offering brochure describing "Eye to Eye", a series of 10 programs from the Museums of Fine Arts in Boston, plus new work from Edwin Dickinson, Skip Sweeney, Jean Dupuy, Steina & Woody Vasulka, and Chris Burden.

Art Transition, an intensive five-day examination of the status and development of visual arts in contemporary society, is being sponsored by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's Center for Advanced Visual Studies and the University Film Study Center.

The event, planned from Oct. 15-20, will combine panel discussions, performances, demonstrations, film and video screenings, and both indoor and outdoor art events covering a full range of "advanced" forms of art that have become publicly evident in the last decade, with considerable emphasis on video.

Among the video-related artists and observers the program are David Cort, Gerald O'Grady, Jeffery Shaw, Douglas David, Les Levine, Matko Mestrovic (Yugoslavia), Aldo Tambellini, Howard Wise, Allan Kaprow, as well as other major artists in the contemporary scene.

For details, contact MIT News Office, Room 5-111, 77 Massachusetts Ave., Cambridge, Mass. 02139. (617) 253-2701.

The Fourth International Open Encounter on Video is being held October 30-November 7 in Buenos Aires, coordinated by the Center of Art and Communication (CAYC) at their showroom. Tapes from Europe, U.S. and all over Latin America will be shown evenings, as well as roundtables with artists and other participants.

Woodstock, N.Y.: Woodstock Community Video (Box 519, Woodstock 12498) is undertaking a Bicentennial project for next summer called "Video America Project" in which a team of videomakers will visit selected local origination centers at cable systems around the country with color equipment to produce programming about local Bicentennial activities.

The tapes produced in each locale will be combined with Bicentennial tapes from other sites for a special cablecast program. Staff members will also be available for workshops during the visit. An edit of the entire project will be aired on public broadcasting in Spring 1977. The group will begin planning its itinerary in October from applications which were received before May 1.

Theatre Vanguard (9014 Melrose Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90069) requests that independent film/video artists interested in possible screenings, appearances contact Douglas Edwards at the theatre. The Theatre is one of the centers of experimental screening in the Southern California region.

To be listed in the *Film and Video Makers Travel Sheet*, write for form to Film Section, Museum of Art, Carnegie Institute, 4400 Forbes Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15213. Attn: J. Rowlands.

The Museum of Modern Art in New York, has been screening video art work daily from 11-2, Mon. through Sat., for nearly a year. The largest show called "Projects: Video V," which featured documentary videomakers in 7 hour-long programs, closes Oct. 30. Among the artists were TVTV, Downtown Community TV, Nam June Paik, Telethon, Chris Burden, Trisha Brown, Les Levine, Darcy Lange, Global Village, Cara DeVito, and Ilene Segalove. The next show, which has no theme, will run from November 1 through January 30.

A new gallery, "63 Bluxome St." in San Francisco will feature work of three video artists—Joel Hermann, Craig Schiller, and Darryl Sapien—during the month of October.

The 12th Annual Avant Garde Festival in New York, as usual, featured a great deal of video. Coordinated by Shridhar Bapat, video playback and environments have comprised some 15-20% of the arts activities at past festivals. This year's festival was held September 27 at an old airfield in Brooklyn. *TeleVISIONS* will review it next issue.

Refocus, the largest student-run film and photography festival is accepting entries for its Fall Festival—October 22-26 at Iowa University. In addition to feature and independent screenings, there will be a series of speakers including: Sydney Pollock, John Szarkowski, and, heading up the video program, Norman Lear. Also in the video portion of the show, Eric Sommers will conduct workshops in video art, utilizing quantizers and lasers, and a unique process, pioneered by Sommers, of etching laser images on copper plates. For information and entry forms contact: *Refocus*, Iowa Memorial Union, University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa 52242. (319) 353-5090.

Changing Channels - Boston Museum of Fine Arts retrospective on video, has been postponed due to funding cuts from the Massachusetts Council on the Arts. The program planned will include historical works from the Experimental TV Centers in San Francisco, New York and Boston and recent works by independent artists. Originally scheduled for October, Rebecca Lawrence, TV Producer for the Museum, says that "a future date will be determine when resources for new funding are found."

TVTV, hard at work on various projects from their new base of operations in Los Angeles, has just submitted two major proposals to Rockefeller Foundation, their major backer through WNET Labs in New York. The larger—for some \$330,000 would fund combined coverage of the 1976 elections and Bicentennial celebrations. Programs would air mid-June to mid-November of election year over PBS. Second proposal is an informal request for the Foundation to consider funding a weekly series of independent video journalists, including eight groups other than TVTV.

Chicago's Museum of Contemporary Art featured a Video Art exhibition during the month of August, including video environments by Paik, Campus, Kos, Dan Graham and others.



SAN FRANCISCO: "The Martian Report" is one of the funniest and lowest-budget programs you'll ever see, and it's the only program currently on the San Francisco cable system's educational channel, which charges producer Jem Neidhardt \$13/half-hour to air the show. Howard Reingold—known to local fans as Howard K. Martian—reports every week on some earthling institution or event, "live" on tape. Neidhardt shoots the whole show in one tape, with Howard ad-libbing his way through all sorts of crazy situations. It's

very much like early radio and live TV must have been. The twosome, which is backed by a friend, Mathew McIntosh of Synapse Productions, has produced 10 programs in black-and-white, and in process of doing some studio production in color. They hope to pare down an edit to raise some interest from sponsors. Write: 475 Roosevelt Way, SF 94114. (415) 431-4733. Neidhardt has also been airing weekly "People Watchers," which is also "live-on-tape" locations of various interviews. He calls them "Surrealistic documentaries."

Video & programming First-class access outfit in Calif.



hen Barry

Verdi answers the phone at the new San Jose Community Media Center, his cheery greeting—"Hello, Channel Two-B, the Friendly Channel"—echoes through the nearly 13,000 square foot space. But not for long, if the plucky public access project 50 miles south of San Francisco can help it.

Now in its third year, the largely volunteer organization has moved from a space in Verdi's parish hall (he's an ordained priest), to a tiny space at the Gill Cable Co. (60,000 subscribers), then to a larger studio, and now to a cavernous former printing facility in an industrial section of San Jose. (299 Stockton, San Jose, Ca. 408-287-5727)

Verdi, who is the only employee paid by the cable company, and Robert Hawk, who is director of the Media Center, manage the public access operation in San Jose, with lots of help from volunteers and student interns. At the peak of operation, Channel 2-B was cablecasting some 120 hours of programming per week, which is almost the only local programming on the Gill system since local origination was discontinued for financial reasons.

The new Media Center will allow for several studios, a huge public meeting area, offices, an audio studio, a library and modulation control room. With that kind of space, 2-B will outclass many local broadcast outfits, including the local ABC affiliate down the road, which, incidentally, is also owned by Gill.

It was this cross-ownership conflict which initially gave Verdi and other community media organizers in San Jose, the legal club to negotiate with the cable system, which is grandfathered, thus having no legal obligation to provide support for public access. Working with the local Committee for Open Media's Phil Jacklin, the group was successful in gaining financial as well as technical support for their access project. The result has been considerable success.

The new facility will allow expansion of their program in San Jose, but will cost quite a lot. The first few months rent-at \$1200 per month—is being picked up by Gill, but thereafter the group must pay its own way.

They intend to do this by charging access users for equipment for the first time—\$25 per month for a weekly half-hour show.

The huge public area in the Media Center is also ideal for staging local "American Bandstand"-type dances, which can bring in revenue, help local young people, and provide programming for the channel. Verdi has been working at fund-raising as well, but with little success. A proposal was recently turned down by state and local officials, in favor of a rival project at the city's library, notes Verdi with some bitterness.

However the group has succeeded in spinning off another access project in nearby Los Gatos. One member of the volunteer staff, Eric Danster, has organized Los Gatos Community TV (405 Alberro Way, Los Gatos, CA. 95030. 408-358-1931), which is now programming some 6 hours per week on the TelePromter system that serves 4400 subscribers in two small cities. Like San Jose, the local origination channel was dropped a year ago. The access group rents the former L.O. studio and channel time at \$650 per month, which is financed from donations from the community.

—Nick DeMartino

PTL cassettes find a market

The protest from the commercial video industry that erupted over the public broadcasting system's entry into videocassette distribution field last winter seems to have been for good reason, if the first semi-annual report is any indication.

In its first six months of operation the Public Television Library (PTL) Video Program Service reports 333 sales and 38 rentals of public TV programs on videocassettes.

Commercial distributors let loose with howls when the government-backed programming became available in the still wide-open videocassette market, since costs for a half-hour averaged roughly one-half the commercial counterpart.

PTL was set up 10 years ago as a distribution arm among public broadcasters to obtain programming from other stations—both the national material which is seen on nearly all PBS stations, and local programs which might have use in other markets but which did not merit full network use.

But, with the advent of extensive educational library and community use of videocassettes for viewing of programs in a non-broadcast mode, PTL decided to produce a catalog of public TV shows for these new audiences.

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Since all programs PTL distributes had previously been paid for, the royalty costs are lower than commercial counterparts—hence the complaints by the industry.

In September PTL issued a supplement to its initial catalog, which listed 1,000 titles, and expects a full-fledged 1976 edition—with 2,000 titles—by November. The new catalog will list tapes by subject categories.

While virtually all PTL-distributed programs are currently produced by public TV stations, Alan Lewis, PTL's Supervisor of Acquisitions, says that the system will consider already produced programming from any source. The only stipulation is that the programming must be broadcast quality quad format, since the primary users of PTL are still public TV stations. A selection committee comprised of 8 station program directors meet twice a year to pass on programs submitted.

The deadline for the January meeting is Dec. 1. Details and entry forms are available from Lewis at PTL, 475 W. L'Enfant Plaza, SW, Washington D.C. (202)488-5000. Lewis points out, that royalty payments may not be competitive with commercial distributors, although the PTL catalog reaches some 7,000 program purchasers.

Video shots

From around the country, news from the videosphere:

Somerville, Mass. Media Action Project: "We got a grant from the Dept. of Mental Health, but lost one from the Office for Children. We've bought a big van and took 30 kids on a trip to Rochester to end our summer program—that was good. We've been programming the local access Channel for 3 years now. October 5 is our 3rd birthday benefit party, so we keep doing it. But it gets harder with resources drying up...."

New Orleans (La.) Video Access Center aired a program about the local controversy about building another bridge over the Mississippi River on educational channel 26 in July. It was re-broadcast in August. The tape was co-produced by Stevenson Palfi of NOVAC and Bill Ruston of a local paper,

with assistance from the channel 26 staff. The tape has also been aired before federal transportation officials in Washington. NOVAC also reports progress in its pilot Survival Information Television project, with four waiting rooms in local clinics. The tape was "How to Be a Smart Shopper." NOVAC list 38 individuals and groups currently contributing to its support. (Write: 1020 St. Andrews, New Orleans 70130).

Columbus (Ind.) Video Access Ctr. has received \$4,000 arts outreach grant for 3-county area. VAC reports CETA Title II employee has received funding for another year. A new tape list has been printed in their *Videogram*. (Box 146, Col. IN. 47201).

Philadelphia: A massive videotaping of R. Buckminster Fuller's illustrated lectures spanning some 43 hours of discourse has been edited by The Fuller Archives (3500 Market Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104). The first showing was held Aug. 18-29 at a special seminar. Future seminars are planned.

England: Author of newly published "Basic Video in Community Work," Phil Shingle, reports that he will return home to U.S., where he will be compiling video work done in England on U.S. standard videotape. Subjects cover kids video, video in community work, alternative technology. You can contact him c/o Paul Bernstein, 610 Jean St., Oakland, CA. He is also looking for community video work in the U.S.

Minn.: Public Service Video, a social studies class in St. Paul, offers to make dubs of any of their 20 videotapes for \$1.50 service charge (individuals, \$3.00 for institutions), when accompanied by a half-hour, 1/2" EIAJ standard tape. For catalog and details write PSV, New City School, 400 Sibley St., St. Paul, MN. 55101.

Santa Barbara: Innovisions video production has expanded into a non-profit group called Pacific Coast Video, headed by Charlie Bensinger, Gordon Forbes and others. Pacific Coast is programming for cable and undertaking various video projects in the Santa Barbara/Ventura area of Southern California. (121 Dele Guerra, SB, CA. 805-965-5015). By the way, Bensinger's excellent handbook—"Peterson's Guide to Videotape Recording" has sold an amazing 75,000 copies at \$2 each.

New York: Ira Schneider of Raindance, et. al., reports that the two books they are preparing for Harcourt, Brace Jovanovich about video are doing well, with a spring publication date for the videoart book and a probable fall date for the book on video communicators. Schneider has solicited articles and page-layouts from videoartists and community video folks around the country. Another project—a magazine about the media to be prepared for cassette distribution—is in the early stages of planning.

Denver: Dean and Dudley Evenson, formerly of Raindance, April Video Cooperative, and Mysteries of the Sacred Hoop, now find themselves in Denver, where they are communing with Native American energies and getting slowly into distributing the tapes they have made about Indian medicine men and the great spirit. If you'd like to communicate, write: 4936 W. 38th Ave., Denver, Colo. 80212. (303)433-8055.

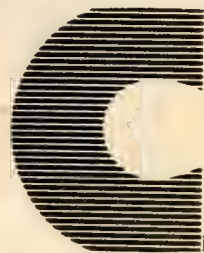
Los Angeles: Environmental Communications, which is primarily into high-quality architectural slides and film, also distributes video and is mulling around with production. For a gorgeous catalog, which does list a page of video, including TVTV, Ant Farm, and others. (EC, 64 Windward Ave., Venice, CA 90291). John Hunt is resident videor....

The L.A. Parks and Recreation Dept., and L.A. Cinematheque have launched a *Televisionaries* project to produce a series of 30 and 60-second "public service" spots for local TV which would not sell anything—instead they would offer "an aesthetic experience which is in itself a public service." The project is accepting 22 and 45-second excerpts for these spots, in both film (16mm, super-8, B&W or color) and video (1/2" EI AJ, B&W or color).

Deadline for consideration is Nov. 15. There is no fee for entry, but producer must be willing to provide film or video at sufficient quality to be used over broadcast—meaning camera original or duplicate printing master of films and first generation or time-base corrected video. L.A. residence is not required.

Write for form to LA County Dept. of Parks & Recreation, Cultural Arts Section, L.A. 90015. (213) 749-6941 ext. 667.

Broadcast TV PBS worries over corporate underwriters



Shaking under an intensifying media glare on the problem of corporate underwriting of programming, public TV leaders are trying to come up with a set of "guidelines" that will lead the system out of the maze and into greater public favor.

Dubbed the "Petroleum Broadcasting Service" for its heavy dependence on oil company underwriting, PBS program managers debated hot and heavy at Sept. 22-23 Programming Committee meeting in Chicago.

The question is not *whether*, but *how much* control over future underwriting the system will impose on itself—smaller stations pushing for tighter regulations initially proposed by PBS legal staff, and the larger stations (who are often beneficiaries of corporate largesse) holding out for softer guidelines.

Drafts under consideration may be completed by December, to act on what many see as crisis for PBS system. As PBS President Hartford Gunn put it in Chicago: "We must as a system come together on this issue, because if we don't there are people waiting in the wings to tear you limb from limb."

(*TeleVISIONS* Magazine will feature a special look at PBS corporate underwriting in the November-December issue. Meanwhile, major critical pieces have run recently in the *NY Times*, *Variety*, *the Wall St. Journal*, *the Village Voice*, and NBC is planning a special on the subject.)

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to cereal boxes
to television, it's more
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And children need visual as well as verbal and written communication skills to communicate, interpret, and understand today's world. **TELL ME WHAT YOU SEE** is a filmstrip about the Milford, Ohio, schools where visual literacy is part of the curriculum. Children in Milford are not only learning *about* the visual media, they are *using* the visual media to create their own messages. **TELL ME WHAT YOU SEE** is an in-depth look at visual literacy in action, as shown and told by those who make it happen—teachers and students.

TELL ME WHAT YOU SEE was produced by AECT for the Leadership in Library Education Institute, Florida State University, supported by a grant from the Division of Library Programs, U.S. Office of Education. Color filmstrip, audiocassette, script booklet: \$11.95. Use the coupon provided to order.

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At stake is the entire funding structure of PBS, which is unstable and subject to influence by vested interests—not only private corporations that make more and more programming decisions, but from political appointees on the board of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting and from Congress, which still refuses to provide “insulated” funding on a long-term basis.

In addition to debate over the PBS staff report on corporate underwriting, the Programming Committee also considered:

- revising mechanics of the laborious and confusing Station Program Cooperative, which provides 35% of the national PBS programs. SPC III will begin its first “preference” round—in which stations vote on program proposals—later this fall. (See *TeleVISIONS* special report in the last issue.)

- inaugurating the new Station Acquisition Market (SAM), that would pool resources for stations to get better buys on already produced programs. The first major buy will be a 2½-hours WGBH-TV “docu-drama” about Watergate. Some smaller stations were piqued that the SAM money would go for public-TV programming, which in the past would have been provided free. The SAM is also finalizing a deal to buy 100 film classics from Janus Films.

- avoided entirely the controversial question of opening up the public TV system to independent producers, who currently must work with public TV stations in order to be eligible for SPC consideration or for most pilot funding.

PBS staffers seemed anxious to avoid bringing out in the open yet another question that would pit PBS stations against each other.

Many small stations have voiced support for cheaper and more diverse program sources, while the larger production centers argue to keep the money “in the family.” Don Feddersen, a member of the Programming Committee and a station manager agrees that “the question is still open.”

—Sanford Rockowitz and staff reports

Rewriting history: Dirty linen days at CBS

By Barbara Zheutlin
& David Talbot

On the verge of exhausting every known entertainment formula, TV producers have turned to truth—gut-wringing, no-holds-barred realism—to boost the networks' prime time ratings. On October 2, the CBS network broadcast a 2-hour dramatic special about John Henry Faulk, the talk-show host fired by CBS in 1957 after he was accused of being pro-communist by a right-wing broadcasting publication. Faulk, who became a media outcast after his expulsion from network airwaves, took his accusers to court in 1962 with the help of attorney Louis Nizer and won the largest libel judgement in history.

The CBS drama featured William Devane, last seen as JFK in the TV special “Missiles of October”, as Faulk, and George C. Scott as the celebrated Nizer, and was sponsored by everyone's favorite pillar of corporate enlightenment—Xerox.

On the surface, CBS' decision to air the program seems to be a daring and honorable act—a milestone in the struggle to liberate commercial television. Here's the nation's “number one” network taking the initiative to expose its own sordid involvement in the entertainment blacklist of the '40's and '50's. In truth, however, the CBS decision—which was made in Chairman William Paley's office—was not altogether motivated by lofty instincts.

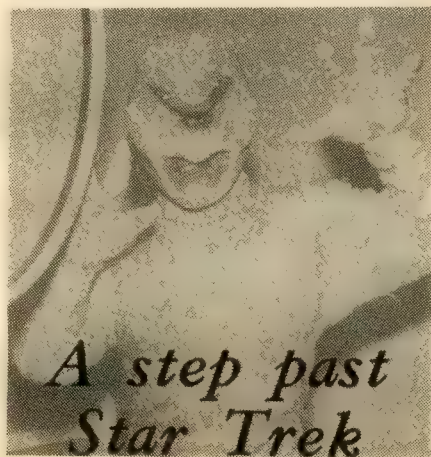
As Stanley Chase, producer of the TV special, pointed out: “We knew NBC was going to pick it up if they didn't; and it looks much better for them to wash their own dirty laundry in public than letting another network do it.” There are obvious advantages to be gained from writing your own history. The teleplay does show us one or two of the CBS execs involved in the Faulk incident (they are portrayed as men who mean well, but cannot resist forces larger than themselves; forces like that sinister spectre—public pressure).

Barbara Zheutlin and David Talbot are Los Angeles-based free-lance writers interested in media corporations.

But the TV audience will *not* see anything of the massive corporate machinery CBS established in the '50's to screen out political undesirables. Only writers, actors, actresses, and directors “cleared” by CBS “security officer”, Daniel T. O'Shea, were eligible for employment on CBS programs. The procedures which television talents were often forced to go through to prove their loyalty and patriotism were elaborate and grueling tests. All references to O'Shea and his dirty work are delicately omitted in the CBS production.

Another serious shortcoming is the TV special's failure to attack the heart of the blacklist's anti-communist ideology. It was monstrously unfair to ruin Faulk's career, the drama seems to state, because he was *not* a communist—he was just a good civil libertarian. The program stops far short of challenging the Cold Warriors' right to track down true communists and destroy their lives.

This is not to say we should have boycotted CBS on October 2. The special revealed far more than most prime time fare. But since truth is enjoying a certain vogue this television season, the public should demand the whole truth and nothing but.



A step past
Star Trek

If you can identify the host of TV's “Shock Theatre” and remember who “Captain Video's” assistant was? Then join Adam Malin and Gary Berman, both 19, who have been on a fantasy trip for the last seven years. Their trip however, has been one with a difference.

The two fantasy freaks are not content to merely sit back and watch science fiction and horror films or gaze at comics. Instead, they have been bringing fans with similar interests together through their magazine, *Infinity*, and fantasy conventions.

“We were both raised in the space age,” said Malin at the recent “Telefantasy Convention” in New York. This may explain their devotion to science fiction and other types of fantasy, but how do two young teenagers get into the business of publishing magazines, and organizing large conventions? “There's a whole breed of convention chairmen of our age,” Malin said. “You don't need initial funds to do it. All you need is a budget. I have never spent a cent of my own money to fund a single one of my projects. I know the public doesn't believe that, but by balancing my funds - cash flow is what it is - I never have to invest a cent of my money.”

One of the two New Yorkers' earliest projects was *Infinity*, a magazine which at its peak had a circulation of about 5,000, according to Malin. It offered interviews with well-known cartoonists, art work in the fantasy and science fiction realm, and articles on various aspects of fantasy.

From *Infinity*, the pair evolved into organizing fantasy conventions, bringing together fans of science fiction, horror, comics, films, television, and other areas of popular culture. They held their first convention about five years ago.

“When I went in and booked the New Yorker for a convention at the age of fifteen, it very quickly made it evident that anybody with half a notion to could go out and do this,” said Malin.

Within the next couple of years, five new conventions sprang up, and now there are enough fantasy conventions to satiate even the most fanatical devotee. “If you blink you'll miss a convention,” according to one enthusiastic fan.

The “Telefantasy Convention,” held August 1 through 3 at the Commodore Hotel, was new this year. Malin and Berman wanted to expand the scope of fantasy offered by conventions. Illustration and writing were joined with film and television.

Along with the dealers of comic books, posters and other fantasy memorabilia, the convention offered films like “The Three



Illustration: Anthony Cresci

Stooges,” Vincent Price horror movies, TV shows and a costume parade. Of course, *Star Trek* was not left out.

In addition to the movies and TV shows there were group discussions and celebrity appearances, among them Noel Neill, the Lois Lane of the “Superman” show, Whit Bissel, star of several 1950's horror films, and Jim Danforth, a master of special effects.

Malin seemed pleased with “Telefantasy.” Both he and Berman are looking forward to more conventions with an even wider range of offerings. —Sallie Fisher & Mary Picinsky

FCC gets into citizens groups

“Action Alert” is the name the FCC has assigned a month-old service for citizens groups who want to keep informed of Commission actions before it is too late. After years of prodding from Citizens Communications Center and other public-interest media groups, the Commission finally agreed to send out a summary of FCC future actions to “qualified” organizations. At present some 200 groups receive the summary, which instructs groups on deadlines for filings, how to obtain entire proposals for comments, and other pertinent information ordinarily obtained only for corporate clients by the large Washington law firms.

“The idea behind Action Alert” says Larry Secret, an aide to FCC Chairmen Wiley, “was in response to citizens groups. The object is to broaden the base of comment on major decisions.”

Any bona fide citizens group may apply for the service from: Executive Director, Federal Communications Commission, 1919 M St, NW, Washington, D.C. 20554. Ask about Action Alert.

Stanford study documents FCC bias on license battles

A report by communications doctoral students at Stanford University documents what everyone has long suspected: that the Federal Communications Commission favors its friends in the broadcasting industry when it considers citizen license challenges.

“It is almost a foregone conclusion that the outcome of an FCC decision involving broadcasters and citizens will favor the

broadcaster,” say the authors of *Citizen Action and the FCC: The Decade of Dissent*.

The paper, prepared for an academic audience this fall, attempts to evaluate the importance of petitioner and issue characteristics in predicting success before the FCC.

Using the FCC's own records, the research team studied FCC behavior in dealing with nonbroadcast citizens' complaints over the past ten years. After reviewing legal and case studies, various hypotheses attempting to explain FCC actions, and empirical evidence the researchers found:

- On certain policy issues citizens were faced with different degrees of consistency in the commission's rulings;

- Stated rules and administrative law standards are not enforced by the FCC;

- Requests for waivers of commission procedure were rarely granted in cases involving the complaints of private citizens;

- 137 of 228 non-broadcast cases failed for some explicit conflict with Commission policy or precedent;

- 144 of the non-broadcast cases failed because the petitioners were unable to present sufficient evidence;

- There was less dissent on the commission when the issue involved one of the more powerful broadcasters;

- Citizen groups had considerably more success than private citizens in gaining a favorable response from the commission.

Citizen Action and the FCC is just one part of the Stanford team's investigation. The group is also interviewing action groups like The National Citizens Committee for Broadcasting (NCCB), Black Efforts for Soul in Television (BEST), and the Citizens Communications Center (CCC) to determine how activists evaluate themselves.

The group hopes to prepare a book of their findings, including specific case studies, for general audience use.

—R.E. Moore

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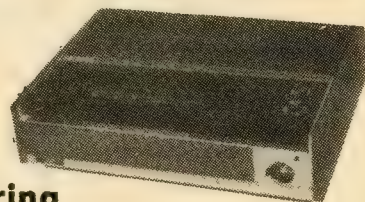


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A primer on buying video

Getting what you need

By Ray Popkin

Through the decision made when purchasing the original equipment for any video operation will help or hinder the project for years to come, it is amazing to see the lack of care taken in the beginning stages of system development. In our survey of educational video, we have found the same equipment problems shared by every other video sector, namely poor system purchasing and poor system planning. While a few of the pitfalls cannot be avoided, most of them can be, if a few simple guidelines are followed.

Poor system purchasing means paying too high a price for equipment, buying equipment that is overly sophisticated or inadequate for your needs, buying equipment with a short lifespan and buying equipment that is or will soon be obsolete. Poor system means finding out once your budget is spent that you left out major necessities like lighting or sound equipment, finding out that your system cannot be expanded to meet future needs or simply finding out that the equipment will not produce the results you desire. Many of these problems can be avoided by following these suggestions.

1. Know what your needs are. Before even considering the purchase of equipment there should be a firm grasp of projected usage of the equipment. This goes beyond stating a need for training tapes or a need to have kids make tapes. In the case of training or educational video tapes, you will need to have a good idea of the quality of material you will need to meet your education goals and a clear knowledge of the intended distribution mechanism.

Projected material quality is extremely important, for in many cases tapes fail to have the desired effect upon an audience because of quality rather than content. A single camera focused on a talking head may meet the needs of someone who must imbibe the information to pass an exam or earn a promotion, for they have no choice but to watch. On the other hand, if you are trying to reach an audience with a "watch or not-watch choice" you might find the material totally inadequate. You also might find that visually interesting material brings about an increased amount of retention. Many viewers will not put up with tapes that have poor audio, tapes with camera work that makes them seasick, or tapes that are unedited and boring. You will need to know the production level to which you must rise, and you will need to know what equipment is needed to reach it. Secondly you will need to know what form of distribution you will use. If you plan to distribute copies of the tapes, feed them through a multiple outlet closed circuit system or a cable TV system, or if you plan to boost them to broadcast quality you will need equipment above and beyond a simple camera, recorder and editor. For instance, if other machines you should use editing machines with vertical interval editing, and you should have testing equipment to insure stability of SYNC, and tension. While a tape may look good on your monitor it may not play through another system by the time it is copied. The same is true of sound, as sound signals produced by some equipment deteriorates greatly in copying. If you plan to cable cast tapes, the quality will have to be even greater.

You will also need to know the conditions under which you will be shooting. If you plan to shoot indoors only, you will have to know acoustics, lighting conditions, power availability and even the colors of the walls.

2. Get Help. Read up on the subject, visit several other video operations and then get a friend or a consultant who has learned the hard way, to see you through the design and purchase of your system. By consultant, we don't mean you have to hire an engineer, or pay \$200 a day. We mean find some one who has experience, and who has put together a system that works. It could be a local video person, health communicator, cable TV operator etc.

When most people get ready to build a system they go either to a retailer or manufacturer and ask what they should buy. As far as manufacturers are concerned, have you ever met one that won't tell you their equipment is the best for your needs? On the retail level you may or may not be OK.

Many hardware dealers around the country are audio or electronics dealers just getting into video and many don't have the experience needed to make solid nuts and bolts decisions. There are also dealers who have no idea at all what they are talking about and other dealers who will sell you anything they can. Thus it is best to have someone with you, who won't be sucked in by "this is just as

good" or "this is a better bargain". While our experience with retailers in the DC-New York region has been good to excellent in terms of dealer honesty and knowledge, we have seen cases of flagrant abuse.

3. Think About The Future One thing whether another person's assistance will be very helpful with is assessing how your current purchase will meet future needs. Inevitably people find that they want to expand their system or improve its capabilities. At this point folks often find that they have to scrap what they have and start over. Unless you start out by buying everything you need to make broadcast quality tapes through a time base corrector, you will sooner or later find out that you need to upgrade your system. You may also find new products coming out that could improve your editing or which could place a color system within your reach, if they can be integrated with what you have. For instance some Automated Video editing consoles will work with some editing decks and not others. While a color camera may cost too much for you now, the cost is coming down. Someday you may want to buy that color video tape recorder which may be only a few hundred dollars more than Black and White.

In working with kids planning the future is important also since, as time goes on, their capabilities will expand into areas of editing, sound mixing and lighting. If the system does not allow for the expansion of skills, interest will die out.

4. Find a Good Dealer. Finding good equipment retailers as we have said will make life easier in many ways. In finding one the most important thing is a good recommendation from other customers. Besides a recommendation here are some other things to look for: Do they have a repair shop? It is important that the dealer be able to repair your equipment, for other dealers give priority repair service only to their own customers (unfair but true) and factory repair centers involve shipping and long delays. They should have a lot of TV experience and preferably at least one person who has at some time been involved in using the equipment. They should handle several lines of competing equipment

and should be able to sell complete systems including editing consoles, light, sound, tripods etc. They should be just as willing to sell you a \$5 item as a \$10,000 one. There is nothing so disconcerting as dashing out from a live shooting location to a dealer for a simple cable you need on an emergency basis and having him tell you that the purchase is too small for them to handle. It happens.

5. Get Hands-on Experience Before You Buy. It is best to work with someone else's equipment or take a training course before you purchase equipment. By using the hardware you will get a better feel for its capabilities and weaknesses and you may get a chance to compare like models to determine which feels best for you.

6. More On Accessories. We said before that the so-called accessories can make or break your efforts. Even kids working with a portapak in the classroom want to be able to understand each other, yet often tapes are unintelligible and the kids grow bored. Other tapes turn off viewers because they can't clearly see the subjects on the screen or because the camera will not sit still for a second. Lastly, shooting may grind to a halt because of a power overload that could have been solved by a 40-foot heavy duty extension cord running to another room.

Many will tell you that good light and sound is too much for the beginner to deal with. In fact even young students are capable of understanding basic sound techniques and

you ever intend to record meetings or music, a mike mixer is also essential.

Electro Voice puts out some very good and very rugged microphones that anyone would find difficult to tear up. Buy the models with rugged casing and good quality, the lower priced models will not suit reproduction needs. For Lavalier we suggest the Sony ECM 50, its about the best around. Be sure not to confuse it with the less expensive ECM 16 which can't put out the signal you will need.

As far as lights are concerned, look for ruggedness in both the stands and the lights. Cheap stands will tip over damaging both the lights and possibly humans. Plastic lights break easily. While there are some good light kits on the market, we found that making our own was the best deal. We started out with two Lowell Tota-lights, which are our most often used. These lights have umbrellas which diffuse and don't blind people or cast heavy shadows. We added a Colortran mini-pro spot with barn doors and a Colortran mini-broad. These combined with a case, light stands, clamps and bulbs cost less than \$500 (prices may have gone up though). We have enough lighting capability to meet almost every situation we face.

You should also have a good tripod on hand as many tapes that feature shots of lengths longer than 60 seconds look like they were recorded in a rowboat. If you really want professional looking movement you will need an expensive fluid head costing close to \$500, but if your needs are less exacting and your patience great, try Quickset.

Further Suggestions

Don't be the first to buy a new line of equipment, you may end up the guinea pig. Often times the first models still have many bugs that are worked out in the first several months of marketing. Other times items are being test marketed, or will not be around long. Take the Sony 340 one-inch editing system. It was replaced almost immediately by the much better 3/4 inch completely automated editing system. Consequently the 340 is about the half the price it was a year ago because no one really wants it. Secondly since few people have it you will find few other models around to play your tapes. Wait a little while and see what develops with any new line.

For editing half-inch, there are two decks well worth paying a little extra for. They are the Sony 8650 and the Panasonic 3160. Both have Vertical Interval editing, (insures more stable edits) both have insert capability and many other features. (For a blow-by-blow comparison see TeleVISIONS Vol. 3 # 3). These machines can also be modified to work with the automated editing consoles. If you plan to do any serious cablecasting you will have to think in terms of an extra \$1,500 to \$2,000 for a processing amplifier and cross pulse monitor. The proc amp will maintain signal level quality in making copies and the cross pulse will allow you to see errors in tape tension which could make your tapes uncopyable. 3M company might be your best bet for these.

There are millions of suggestions that can be made, these are some of them. None of these will insure that a totally new system will not come along in two years for half the price and twice the quality. We have yet to find one company or one format that is better than all others, so you just have to compare, study, consult, toss a coin, then hope.



light qualities. Working out sound and light problems makes the subject more interesting and gives more kids something to do. Most importantly good sound and light makes the videotapes intelligible.

When budgeting many add up the price of the big items like a portapak, monitor, editor and playback deck and then add a few hundred dollars. Experience shows that even for the simplest of operations, a good light kit costing at least \$300, a good sound kit costing at least as much, a good tripod, and a lot of cables, gaffer tape, and power cords are essential. It is in these areas that most of the skimping takes place and in these areas that most tapes suffer. Reality tells us that you can not get consistent intelligible sound from a cheap microphone, or the mike in the camera. You should have at least one good omnidirectional and one directional microphone available for different applications. If



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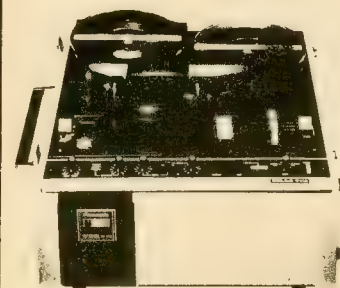
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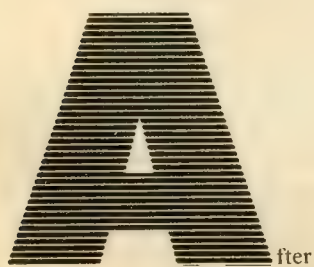
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Health & social services

Xenia health show ends up a racket

By Ray Popkin



fter

much trial and tribulation, an exciting health education project in Xenia, Ohio has completed its first round of over-the-cable health skills classes. The successful conclusion of this project which combined three half-hour health programs with eight neighborhood workshops tells two stories. The first story is how cable can be used to provide improved health skills to consumers. And the second is about people with a desire to meet priority needs of a community who succeed despite the fact that financial support was withdrawn from their project in favor of tennis lessons. The project was carried to its completion by supporters at Antioch College and Health Skills Associates with support from the Ohio Board of Health.

Under the guidance of the Health Skills Associates, video people at Antioch produced three half-hour video tapes, "The Healthy Child", "Signs and Symptoms of Illness", and "Managing Common Illnesses". A variety of families from Xenia communities provided input on content needs and presentation, both prior to and during production. A great deal of time and energy was spent by project staff long before production forming a community advisory board which decided on subject areas. Many of these and other families were the subjects in the tapes themselves. This community interaction is key to the success of any local effort on cable.

The tapes do a good job of providing a broad spectrum of information in a clear and concise manner. The family participation as subjects in the tapes provides some enjoyable moments as well as making it easy for the audience to identify with the material. The only possible drawback was that so much information was included in such a short time that it could be impossible to remember half of it. This problem however was foreseen by the project staff, and steps were taken to alleviate it.

One tape was shown each week in conjunction with workshops in eight neighborhoods. Each person attending the workshop received the book **Health Skills for Parents**, which reiterated the information in the tapes and presented additional information including illustrations. It is these types of workshops and printed materials that have been the key to success in other similar projects.

While it is well known that follow-up activity greatly enhances knowledge retention from audio visual presentations, and that a-v greatly enhances workshop presentations, many opt for one or the other. In fact one commonly expressed worry is that video tapes will eventually be used to replace health education, as some health officials will seek the easy way out in dealing with pressure for health consumer information.

Gail Benton one of the key staff people on the project has told us that one of the only problems in delivery of the material, was in poor video reception in some areas of the cable system. She also tells us that the workshops were well attended and that people were quite positive about the program.

Now story two. The project was originally funded by a grant to the Dayton-Miami Valley Consortium of Colleges in Ohio. The consortium was given a large grant from the Fund for the Improvement of Post Secondary Education, a program for the purpose of

funding new projects designed to meet the needs of "non-traditional learners." (Non-traditional learners consist of anyone not currently enrolled in formal education.) Under the grant a series of courses were to be given combining cable TV and workshops, with the purpose of involving more people in the educational process. The idea of providing new skills for those not enrolled in regular education institutions can not be faulted. The problems arise when educational priorities are formulated.

According to Bob Devine, professor of

narcotics and alcohol fields."

They are also producing a series of shows for the New Jersey Public Broadcasters on drug programs in the state, one of which will be in Spanish. In the future the New Jersey Drug Abuse network will be plugged into an existing regional microwave network serving New York, Connecticut and New Jersey so that video training programs can be spread out on a larger scale. Through this network, staff in three states will be able to exchange ideas on treatment and learn from each others innovative programs.



Illustration: Andrea Popkin

communications at Antioch, the health skills classes were ousted from the project in favor of tennis and transactional analysis (I'm okay, your okay, even if you're unhealthy). It is people with health problems who would be more likely to pay to take courses. Perhaps more tennis players were willing to contribute to the support of courses than poor people with health problems. Consortium fees were \$25 for non-credit courses and \$50 for credit.

This situation could be the tip of the iceberg. Currently the FCC is loosening social service requirements on cable operators and at the same time keeping local governments from making requirements themselves. Many tell us, "Don't worry there will always be space for social service material." Yet when one channel is set aside for tennis, and one for banking, and one for pay TV, what will be left? In a future without regulation of cable systems and without stricter HEW guidelines on how federal money is spent, social services will never be able to compete for channel space with more profitable ventures such as tennis lessons.

The health skills tapes are available from the Video Facility, Antioch College, Yellow Springs, Ohio 45387. If you would like copies on half-inch EIAJ or one-inch Sony 320 formats, send your blank tapes and they will copy them for you free of charge. Although Antioch dubs the first two hours of tape free and charges \$5 for each additional hour, it would help them if agencies with purchasing budgets contributed for tapes ordered. If you would like the tapes on ¾-inch cassette or the guidebooks, write Health Education Dept., State Board of Health, Columbus, Ohio.

NJ drug agency expands video

The New Jersey Health Department's Drug Abuse Agency is again expanding its already large video operation. The Division of Narcotics and Drug Abuse Control, Video project under Barry Hantman has for some time been using video to spread information around communities about drug abuse and treatment programs. They have also been using it in therapy and counselling.

Now, they are purchasing two complete portable systems for their northern and southern regional offices to create three production centers. These video systems will be made available to public and private drug programs for their use in both producing and viewing tapes. Barry says the purpose of this project is to "develop a state-wide video network which will provide instruction on video equipment, access to equipment, and a library of videotapes for professionals in the

Currently the division library which has tapes on social problems, health, women's rights and other subjects in receiving about 20 requests a month for tapes from folks around the state. This is pretty good considering that many copies of these tapes are available on a regular basis at a number of other locations, such as public schools.

Rumblings on rural health

There are indications that many federally assisted health projects designed to bring better services to rural areas will be encouraged to use communications technology to improve health education. At the time we are going to press there seems to be some confusion as to what this mandate means, and how it will be carried out. We do know that at least two projects receiving funds to work on health delivery in rural areas are now considering health communication components and that one grants officer in the Medical Services Administration branch told us that officials are interpreting the 1974 congressional health budget as pushing for such efforts. We hope to have more on this at a later date.

New studies on two-way cable

Two new studies are now available on two-way TV, applications in medical care. One is entitled, **Benefits and Problems of Seven Exploratory Telemedicine Projects** published by the Mitre Corp. and the other, **Practical Concepts for Using Interactive Television**, published by Practical Concepts Inc. The Mitre study commissioned by the Department of Health Education and Welfare is an overview of seven Telemedicine demonstration projects funded by H.E.W. in 1972. Chapters are devoted to each of the seven projects, detailing their strengths and weaknesses.

The PCI study is devoted entirely to the INTERACT medical microwave network which links several medical facilities in New England. It was funded by the Lister Hill Center for Biomedical Communications of the National Library of Medicine, and takes a very detailed look at one specific project in hopes that those entering into the field can learn from the INTERACT experience. Both of these studies are highly recommended, especially for anyone interested in getting in to two way systems. The PCI study costs \$30, The Mitre Report is unpriced.

Write: Mitre Corp. 1820 Dolly Madison Blvd., McLean, Va. 22101 and ask for MTR-67-87, and PCI, 1730 Rhode Island Ave. N.W. Washington, D.C. 20036.

Video psychiatry & media conference

For the third year in a row there will be a conference on Video, Biofeedback, and other Media in Psychiatric Training and Treatment, at the South Beach Psychiatric Center on Staten Island, N.Y. on Oct 30-Nov 1. The conference will be divided between technical sessions and sessions on therapeutic techniques, and will be geared to beginning, intermediate and advanced videophiles.

Registration costs \$95. For more info, write, Dr. Milton Berger, South Beach Psychiatric Center 777 Seaview Ave. Staten Island, N.Y. 10305

Section 315:

Satellites Defended

A Joint Council of Educational Telecommunications spokesperson, Jeremy N.W. Birkbeck, addresses criticism of recent satellite experiments. JCET is helping to explore the public use of satellites.

International communication satellites have, in a span of a few years, realized the visions of the media prophets: we now live in a global village where a community's physical separation and isolation from the centers of culture, education and diplomacy do not automatically result in intellectual and political stagnation. But where the technology has advanced in leaps and bounds, our ability to deal with its implications and repercussions remain sadly limping behind.

Instant global communication has exposed man to new areas of human activity that are multi-disciplinary and multi-ministerial in character; activities for which we are not prepared. In effect, at a time when a means exists for us to face our interdependence squarely, we are trying to operate on a level at which our traditional categories, whether conceptual, academic or administrative are quite inadequate.

This prefatory rhetoric is intended only as an attempt to establish a platform from which to judge and observe the development of communication satellite experiments, institutions and their implications; for in order to do so with any sense of objective perspective really does require us to jolt our 19th century mechanical frames of reference into this century's electronic reality.

Satellite development

There's no question that satellites work. NASA's early experimental satellites performed the necessary research and development required of any unproven concept and the progress made by them enabled other entities to offer operational services for those who need it. One has only to trace the rapid development of the Intelstat system to over 100 member nations, and to observe the progress being made all over the world in establishing national satellite systems to find proof of that need. Man's interdependence on his fellow man requires swift and efficient communications.

Once the technical bases of satellite communication had been established, it was appropriate that NASA should step in to pursue technical and operational refinements, thereby opening up this medium to new markets and new applications by making the process simpler and cheaper. It is a logical progression from international satellite communication to inter- and intra-community satellite communication. Once the leaders of the political and economic world could achieve the instant communication so necessary in these times, attention could be focussed on applying that same level of sophistication to smaller users with, perhaps, less consequential, but just as vital needs.

NASA's ATS series of satellites was launched exactly for that purpose, and, again, the history of their performance demonstrates that a need existed for a satellite system capable of working with small, simple-to-operate, inexpensive ground terminals. If further proof of that need is required, a look at the rapid development of the Public Service Satellite Consortium and its members should be convincing evidence.

It was the ATS series that brought satellite communication out of the exclusive realm of national governmental use right down to the grass-roots local level user. ATS-6, the last

continued from previous page

and most powerful of the series, demonstrated this fact vividly. The health and education experiments conducted on ATS-6 were all located (with the exception of the Alaskan experiments) in areas where traditional forms of communication, such as highways, mail, telephone and radio already existed but that were not designed to serve the educational and developmental needs of the communities involved.

The results of these experiments have not yet been tabulated or interpreted. The various projects themselves were the first of their kind, not only by virtue of the technology employed by them, but also in their institutional and managerial dimensions. It was inevitable that such revolutionary and sophisticated projects would encounter some problems, and it is unfortunate that some of their more parochial-minded observers chose to focus on and publicize the problems rather than the implications. Mistakes had to happen in order that the operating systems of the future might profit from them.

Such an immensely complex operation requires a high level of management sophistication, and nowhere is this being demonstrated more clearly than in India. In a country where there are virtually no established terrestrial communication networks, ATS-6 is currently engaged in the most ambitious educational satellite communication project ever undertaken by a developing country. The rural television audience of different religions

languages and customs is being united for the first time by a satellite 23,000 miles in the sky in an effort to assist these peoples overcome problems common to them all: agricultural education, personal hygiene and population control. The implications of this year-long experiment will employ behavioral and social scientists for years to come.

Satellites have developed quickly because, like all impactful discoveries, their progress has been steered by men of vision rather than cost-accountants. It is true that more time and money has been spent on the technology of satellites than on the nature of the information the technology was designed to convey. But this has been true of all communications developments. Furthermore, it is much too early to judge, and those who do so run the risk of reaching premature conclusions, for the benefits of ATS-6 and the subsequent satellites it spawns will take years to realize.

In any event, how does one measure the cost of a life saved by a rapid diagnosis made possible by the linking of doctor and patient physically separated by thousands of miles? Those who would call for a moratorium on satellite development are, in effect, arguing for a regression into 19th century parochialism in an age when our very existence hangs on our ability to shift, transmit and digest vast quantities of information swiftly from place to place, nation to nation.

Cable TV FCC looks for way out of access hole



In a mid-July session the FCC effectively canceled the March 31, 1977 deadline for cable TV compliance with its rebuild requirement for access and channel capacity (Docket No. 20363). Due to cable industry lobbying, the commission was convinced that requiring compliance by that date was unrealistic because of the capital necessary to rebuild and the apparent reluctance of financial institutions to provide that capital.

Bearing in mind citizen groups' opposition to cancelling access requirements, however, the FCC stated that removing the deadline should not be regarded as abandonment of its commitment to promote access services, stating, it sees "mounting evidence that access cablecasting...is beginning to fill the need for additional means of community expression."

In a rulemaking proceeding started last June the FCC is asking for alternative suggestions on how to encourage access programming without forcing cable operators to completely rebuild their systems. The commission itself has three ideas: require access only on demand, require compliance with the old rules when a cable system is ready for a "natural rebuild" or, simply require compliance with the rules at some future date.

If you would like to comment on these ideas or have some of your own write the commission. The deadline for reply comments is Nov. 6. Send your suggestions to: Cable Bureau, FCC, 1919 M St., NW, Washington, D.C. 20596.

Nat. guidebooks look for input

Two organizations very different in their composition are asking for your feedback in their publication efforts.

At the National Cable Television Association, they are putting together their annual *Cablecasting Guidebook*, and because of the changes in the local origination rules and the association's desire to provide diversified programming suggestions to their members, they are anxious to include specific program ideas. Consequently if you are working on a

community media project and would like to be included, write: Lydia Newman, NCTA, 918 16th St., NW, Washington, D.C.

Around the corner the National Council for the Public Assessment of Technology is planning a booklet called *The Community Organizers Guide to Appropriate Technology*. The purpose of the publication is to equip civic and consumer leaders with information about technology so that they can build greater public understanding of alternative technological options. Specifically, they are seeking your suggestions for names of people or organizations which ought to be included. Write them at 1785 Massachusetts Ave. NW, Washington, D.C. 20036.



Canadian provinces battle fed authority

A two day communications conference in Ottawa has failed to resolve the long-standing conflict between Canada's federal and provincial governments over responsibility for telecommunications regulation. The meeting ended July 17 with federal Communications Minister Gerard Pelletier claiming that he lacks the constitutional authority even to consider demands by the provinces for increased autonomy in dealing with communications media. Instead, he proposed establishing a ministers' council which could discuss communications issues "within the existing jurisdictional framework," but could not make decisions which would be binding on the federal government. British Columbia, Quebec and Ontario, however, refused to participate.

Pelletier's position, which is supported by Prime Minister Trudeau, is that any change in jurisdiction would require constitutional amendment. At present, all communications, including cable television, are governed by the Canadian Radio-Television Commission

(CRTC) which is similar to the U.S. Federal Communications Commission. The provinces want to have the power to license cable and broadcasting operations as well as telephone and telecommunications carriers operating primarily within each province. Provincial control of cable TV has been the major point of contention for the three provinces which have led the fight against Ottawa. BC Communications Minister Robert Strachan argued that the federal government is incapable of dealing with local needs in the provinces, such as extension of cable services to BC's remoter areas. In refusing to participate in the Ministers' Council, he said, "I must leave BC free to pursue its own destiny." He did not specify what actions the province could take, but did not rule out direct defiance of the federal government.

Quebec has already moved to oppose the CRTC by granting a cable license to an operator not authorized by the federal Commission and sending provincial police to protect its licensee's facilities when CRTC officials and Mounted Police attempted to shut it down. This conflict is now in the courts and may prove to be an important test case on the jurisdictional issue. —Ben Achtenberg

Memphis search for programs

The Memphis city school system is now in the process of initiating an education/instruction cable television project and are in urgent need of program materials. They are looking for programming and program ideas in the areas of language arts, elementary mathematics (grades 1-6) and other enrichment activities. They are especially concerned with cost effectiveness since its funding is limited.

The goals of the CABLECOM project are to create a series of supplementary and new programs which will augment and improve school/community relations, stimulate student creativeness and expressiveness, and provide an opportunity for students to develop independent thought processes for problem-solving using cable TV.

For more information you can write: Jan Torbet, Cablecasting Specialist, Project CABLECOM, 220 N. Montgomery St., Memphis, Tenn. 38104.

SF task force challenges FCC to check Viacom

Two years ago the San Francisco Board of Supervisors appointed a 16 member local task force to respond to two pressing CATV problems in that city.

At the end of September this year the task force, much changed from its original membership, produced a 200-page report, *Cable and the Community*, prepared by staffer Bonnie Engel, with help from Fred Hill.

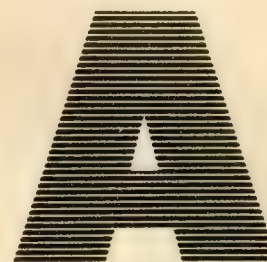
Some elements of the report are predictable, other challenge the FCC's rules and assert the local authority of the city to regulate cable television. Most notable exceptions to the FCC rules as they now stand are provisions figuring the tax base on gross revenue rather than subscriber revenue; specific control over leased channels; and, most importantly, establishing a strong regulatory agency with enforcement powers to assure the reliability and equity of the cable system.

Two developments made the report necessary. When the city's broadcasters built a giant joint transmission tower on Mt. Sutro it improved TV quality in the outlying areas, but in the process also blacked out reception in several new areas of San Francisco. In addition Viacom, the franchise holder, had been challenged by several community groups with the charge they were wiring the wealthier areas of the city first, ignoring the ethnic communities.

The report is now in the hands of the Board of Supervisors and the City Attorney who have the responsibilities for taking action on its recommendations.

For a copy of the complete report write: CATV Task Force, Board of Supervisors, City Hall, Civic Center, San Francisco, CA. 94102.

Libraries & education CPB moves in education role



After nearly seven months of inaction, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting is finally responding to a report on educational uses of public broadcasting made by its Advisory Council of National Organizations (ACNO)—the group of some 48 national organizations set up in 1972 to serve as CPB's excuse for public participation in policy matters. Members include such groups as the National Organization for Women, the Urban League, La Raza, AFL-CIO.

The 100-page education report, issued last March, was a year in the making by four task forces and "involving over 4,000 persons" made a vague call for CPB to "encourage, facilitate recognize and assure" virtually every conceivable activity that telecommunications could make possible.

The CPB board has appointed an education committee that will hear the recommendations for "interim activities" prepared by Doug Bodwell and Mary Sceifford, the education staff who have been carting the report around to all this year's conventions trying to develop some priorities and implementing strategies out of the unordered and vague goals.

The CPB internal report released on Sept. 22 will be elaborated upon in October according to CPB sources.

Activities being supported are largely "information gathering, keying in on utilization, new technology and preparing for future decisions on programming, including funding model situations."

An Instructional Program Cooperative, an educational version of the SPC, called for in the report is "not at the present time" one of the activities, though the staff says it "deserves consideration," and is "a matter for exploration with PBS." The SPC, Station Program Cooperative, is the PBS mechanism through which stations pool resources to fund about 50% of their programming. [See TeleVISIONS, August '75]

Leadership in forming such consortia to pool educational money and the support of non-broadcast production and distribution and small-format broadcast production are the big question marks in CPB's education policy and response to the ACNO report.

Calif. libraries distribute tapes

One of the nation's most ambitious library-based video archive and production projects has acquired more than 50 tapes in its first year—about a quarter of its goal for the two-year, federally funded project.

The California Video Resources Project (CVRP), operating out of the San Francisco Public Library, has screened more than 125 videotapes from around the country since December, when it began in earnest the job of creating a video archives for the state of California. According to Craig Schiller of the CVRP staff, the quality of tapes submitted for review has varied widely. Once a tape is submitted and approved, CVRP pays the producer and acquires a duplicate.

These programs are then scheduled for screening in the library, and inter-library loan throughout the state. Schiller was surprised that so few producers have submitted tapes, since CVRP will review work from anywhere in the country. Reviews of tapes which are accepted as well as some that are interesting but not purchased are included in *Patch Panel*, CVRP's newsletter, which has a circulation of 500.

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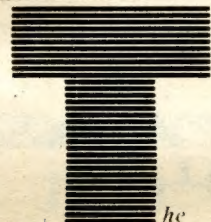
While CVRP is not really equipped under its \$155,000, 2-year grant to become heavily involved in video production, they have produced tapes on an artists Soapbox Derby, the SF Earthquake, and other subjects. Production emphasis, however, is shifting from producing for the public to in-house technical orientation. Schiller will soon produce a series of videotapes about how to use video equipment, which is an area that has evidenced high interest among librarians and others just getting into video.

The production reflects an emphasis at the project towards technical and organizational consultancy for state libraries who need help in funding, equipment, software purchase, and relations with cable TV systems. CVRP has conducted workshops for librarians in the state, as well as for the entire American Library Association membership at the July conference held in SF.

For further information, write Director Roberto Esteves, CVRP, SF Public Library, Civic Center, SF, California. (415) 558-2439.

Women's media 9 cities share videotapes

By Susan Milano



THE INTERNATIONAL VIDEOLETTERS, a monthly tape exchange among women's groups from different cities across the country, act as an information source for current events and as a record of woman's history as seen from her own perspective.

Participating cities (there are nine as of this writing) are grouped into constellations of threes which send each other 30 minute (or less) tapes documenting news, events and subjects of their own choosing. These tapes, which are produced bi-monthly on a staggered basis are then rotated from city to city for monthly showings. At the end of each screening, a short tape of audience feedback is made for inclusion in the next outgoing VIDEOLETTER.

The concept of the **INTERNATIONAL VIDEOLETTERS** was introduced and discussed at the Conference of Feminist Film and Video Organizations (N.Y.C.—February '75) and at the Feminist Eye (Los Angeles—March '75) two sister conferences that gathered over 300 feminist media producers together. Tapes were first exchanged and shown in May. What follows is an updated report on this correspondence.

"Yvonne Wanrow is a 31 year old Indian woman from Spokane Washington. Three years ago, Yvonne Wanrow, in trying to defend her nine year old son from assault by a (known) child molester, shot and killed the child molester. After a five day trial with an all-white jury she was sentenced to 20 years for second degree murder, 20 years for first degree assault and five mandatory years for assault with a deadly weapon. If she goes to prison, she will go for a minimum of 12 years.

YVONNE: "I talked to the probation officer who did the pre-sentence investigation and in his report he stated that I was prone to violence because I purchased a gun. And he said that he lived on a reservation for two years and he knew all about Indians and that I should be taught a lesson. I talked to him for only two hours and just a few minutes after I began talking to him I was disheartened. I knew that he would recommend prison because at first he said that he wanted to be in some other kind of field and he said 'Yvonne, you want to pursue your art career and you want to help other people?' He said that 'Don't you think that in prison with your intelligence and your compassion, don't you think that you could help some of the other inmates?' Well I just said, isn't there any other alternative. I mean, he was glamorizing the prison... 'It's not like a prison at all, it's just like a college.'

"You can't take your children to prison and this whole thing was brought about because of the need that I have to protect my children

and the love that I have for them. I don't know what justice means to you but to me it just doesn't seem like it applies to me or any of my people."

As Yvonne Wanrow's story unfolded, the mood among the twenty women present in the audience was one of tense concern punctuated by audible sighs. The tape continued and moved onto a new segment shot at a demonstration of the Fat Underground, a collective of fat radical feminists who claim to possess suppressed medical information that proves that fat is not unhealthy. They believe that "lookism is a tool of oppression as vital to the patriarchy as sexism or racism." They were demonstrating against a program shown on KNBC that gave "innaccurate information on fat and health and implied that fat was not O.K." Amid marchers carrying signs such as "Weight Control Is Social Control" and chants of "Stop dieting, start living" an interview with one of the group's members told us what they were protesting about.

Next came an attorney for Zsuzsanna Budapest, a Los Angeles witch, with a report on the outcome of her trial for fortune telling. This was actually a follow-up to a previous VIDEOLETTER when Ms. Budapest's story was covered before her day in court. The high priestess of a coven, she has incorporated her woman-based religion in California and considers reading the tarot to be one of the tools of the craft. The jury found her guilty of fortune telling and now she and her attorney intend to take their fight to the Supreme Court if necessary to overturn this decision and change the law.

The rest of this VIDEOLETTER included a taste of a fund-raising concert held to raise money for the new Women's Building in L.A.; some seaside interviews with retired women on their views toward the women's movement ("...I'll just say God bless you in your efforts"); an excerpt from Bread and Roses, a chapter from the L.A. Union; and feedback from the audience in L.A. that watched the last batch of VIDEOLETTERS. This tape, which was produced by the Los Angeles Feminist Video Outlet, wound up with a group rendition of "Happy Trails to You".

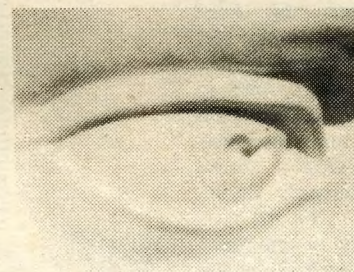


With a certain sense of excitement and expectation we then watched the VIDEOLETTER made by Tuscon Feminists in Media. Starting off with scenes shot in downtown Tuscon we observed as someone fried eggs on the sidewalk in 107 degree heat. Our general amusement piqued when the chef tried to sell an egg to a local policeman who appeared on the scene. Moving right along we were taken to a newly opened coffee house and an interview with the owner, who, through her strong desire to create a nice public place for people to hang out in, was able to deal with all the realities of changing a dingy old store into her dream.

Camera glitch and a woman wearing a football helmet suddenly pops onto the screen. Describing her dull survival-motivated job as a receptionist, she stated some of the advantages of wearing a helmet ("...no man has made any complete passes"). Another glitch and we're passing the Free Clinic on our way to visit and speak with Dorothy Riddle, a member of Alternatives for Women, a group of feminist consultants. Coming from a background as a clinical psychologist, Ms. Riddle talked about the alternatives that opened up for her when she and her partners formed their own company... (e.g. wearing what she wanted; making her own hours; being herself and being able to work as a lesbian among other lesbians without having to be in the closet). Asked what advice she could give to other women who want to start their own businesses she replied... "the main thing I would say is take yourself seriously and tackle the money issue head on cause it's the hardest."

Poolside at an unidentified place four feminists discussed the Free Clinic, the soon-to-be-opened Women's Center and Women Against Rape. Wishing us all goodbye, we got feedback and a final wrapup from two of the producers of this VIDEOLETTER. In a state of apparent exhaustion

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they shared their feelings about the process of making the VIDEOLETTERS and the collective experience of learning how to deal with this new-to-them medium of video. "We worked really hard...you might not be able to tell but we did and we look forward to yours. Goodbye L.A. and New York."

Last but not least we looked at the most recently produced VIDEOLETTER from New York. This one, made by Ariel Dougherty with help from Carol Clement and Tracy Ward, was an exploration of the effect that New York geography has on our lives as women. Starting off with feedback from the June 14 VIDEOLETTER, the tape included visits to an uptown feminist, to another on the Lower East Side, to the Women's Coffee House, some of the May 31st N.Y.C. Feminists Community Coalition meeting and a late night stop as a feminist book, *The New Woman's Survival Source Book*, went to press.

By the end of these screenings we asked the audience to stay and take part in the feedback tape...perhaps one of the most important facets in the process of developing the VIDEOLETTERS. My own theory is that the organic growth of styles evidenced by these tapes has occurred and happened so quickly because of the feedback sessions and because of the regularity of the showings and the exchange of information therein. One of the remarks made during group discussion that evening was that the similarity of the kinds of information that we were passing on to one another and the existence of this understanding of one another's needs in these areas was like a kind of tribal notebook wherein we were writing our own history.

As I sit here typing up this article I realize that by the time it appears in print two more VIDEOLETTERS showings will have already taken place. With the severe lack of any kind of daily reportage of substance on issues that are crucial to our survival as women, either on television or in print, the value of these exchanges cannot be overemphasized. As we signed petitions in support of Yvonne Wanrow, I kept hearing her words in my head. "This case, I feel, it could happen to any one of you...it could happen to any person."

In New York, VIDEOLETTERS showings take place at the Women's Intercart Center. More information about these showings can be obtained by contacting Ariel Dougherty or Carol Clement at Women Make Movies, 257 West 19th Street, N.Y. 10011. For a complete list of participating cities and contacts consult the *New Woman's Survival Source Book*. Letters in support of Yvonne Wanrow can be sent to Governor Daniel J. Evans in Olympia Washington.

Tape exchange

As a regular feature of TeleVISIONS we will list video tapes offered for sale or exchange by video producers around the country. Tapes costing \$25 or less will be listed free, tapes costing up to \$100 will be listed at a rate of \$5.00 per entry and tapes costing over \$100 will be listed at a rate of \$10 per entry. Descriptions shall be limited to 35 words. Although we originally offered this service free of charge, we can no longer afford to do so.

When writing to tape producers, remember to mention TeleVISIONS.

The VFW's New Officers. (7 min., 2") Shows the Veterans of Foreign Wars installation of 1975 officers. Emphasizes the rituals of the group. Based on photo book *Mykind of People*. Rent: \$50. Sale: None. From: Bill Owens, Inc., 268 Yosemite Dr., Rivermore, CA 94550

Help (45 min., 1/2" EIAJ B&W) Focuses on relation between low level radiation and infant mortality. Dr. Ernest Steinglass discusses problems of nuclear energy and explains why he has joined in calling for a moratorium on nuclear reactors. Price: Free with 45-min tape for dubbing. From: Richard Fishkin, Dir., Statue of Life, 2222 E. Carson, Pittsburgh, PA 15203.

The PortaPack and How to Use It (62 min. 1/2" EIAJ B&W) Tape has been used in training people to use half-inch PortaPak system. Features SONY AVC 3400 VTR and 8400 camera. Price: \$60. Rent: None. From: Videoland, Citizens for Community Cable, 851 Cooke St., Honolulu, HI 96813.

How to Get Publicity for Your Club (15 min. 1/2" EIAJ B&W) Veteran newspaper reporter describes procedure to follow to get publicity for community organizations. Rent: \$25. Sale: \$75. From: Training Center for Service, Inc., 1520 N. Leffingwell, St. Louis, MO. 63106.

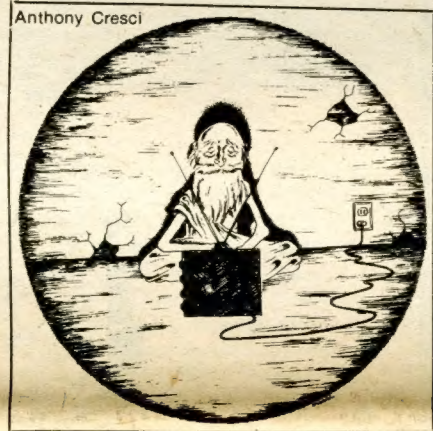
How to Enter the 1975 Improvisational Olympics (30 min. 1/2" EIAJ B&W) Along with rules (printed in "Now let's Improvise") this tape prepares a teacher, club, or amateur improviser to build a team in 1 hour and compete in this new sport. Edited from events in Toronto, Queens and Union Sq. Price: \$18. Rent: \$6. From: Group Creativity Projects, 66 N. Greenwich Rd., Armonk, NY 10504.

Survival New grants in NY



In September the New York Council for the Humanities (326 W. 42nd St., NY 10036. (212) 594-4380) began making grants in support of "symposia, lectures, exhibits, workshops, radio, film, television and cable presentations, or other program formats which address an adult out-of-school audience in the state of NY."

Grants, which can be made to any nonprofit group or institution, will normally not exceed \$25,000 and must be matched either with non-federal funds or in-kind services. To be eligible for funding, programs must involve scholars in the humanities in a critical examination of public policy issues. Preliminary proposals or inquiries should be directed to the above address. Funds came from the National Endowment for Humanities and private foundations.



Who gets money?

Here are some recent grants made in the field of media, as listed by the *Foundation News* and other sources:

- \$40,000, from San Francisco Foundation to American Dance Video, Berkeley, to use video for feedback and documentation with dancers.
- \$30,000 to Committee On Children's Television, San Francisco, for community projects to improve local programming, from San Francisco Foundation.
- \$10,000 to Resource One, San Francisco, for community computer project for social needs, from Dean Witter Foundation.
- \$175,000 to Center for Understanding Media, New York, from Lilly Endowment, for media studies and the transformation of teaching.
- \$100,000 to Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology, Terre Haute, from Lilly Endowment, for technology assessment program.
- \$18,000 to Harvard University from Ford Foundation for conferences in New England on conflicts between the media and the law.
- \$240,000 to Citizens Communications Center, Washington, for public interest litigation and advocacy in communications, from Ford Foundation.
- \$100,000 to Yale University, Media Design Studio, from Rockefeller Foundation, to unite capabilities of media with resources of higher education.
- \$13,000 to American Institute for Political Education, Washington, for study of voter-media relationship, from Cudahy Fund.
- \$32,826 to Cable Arts Foundation, NY from Rockefeller Foundation, for demonstration project on development of arts programming for cable television audiences.
- \$17,150 to Action for Children's Television, Newtonville, MA, from van Ameringen Foundation, toward production and distribution of Resource Handbook on Programming and Handicapped Children for radio and TV broadcasters and others.
- \$750,000 to National Endowment for Humanities for exclusive use of Educational Broadcasting Corporation, NYC, for production of "The Adams Chronicle" Series, by Andrew Mellon Foundation.
- \$125,000 to Center for Research in Children's Television, Harvard University from Spencer Foundation to orderly develop research into effects of television on children, in cooperation with Children's Television Workshop.
- \$12,000 to Clinica del Pueblo de Rio Arriba, Tierra Amarilla, NM, from Arca, for training and education with audiovisual emphasis for clinic staff and patient education.
- \$5,000 to Trenton State Prison, Prisoners Representative Committee, NJ, to publish and disseminate study of parole denial process and for production of videotape of same, from Arca.
- \$20,000 to Young Filmmakers, NYC, from Arca, for media program, including videotape, as part of program to introduce reading as part of the total visual experience for young people.
- \$25,000 to Rocky Mountain Corp. for Public Broadcasting from Robert Wood Johnson Foundation for project with Mountain States Health Corporation to evaluate use of satellite technology to train health professionals.
- \$100,000 from Rockefeller foundation to Educational Broadcasting Corp., NYC, for international program series on global interdependence.
- \$14,165 to Electronic Arts Intermix, NYC, from Rockefeller Foundation, for development of Artists Videotape Resource Project.

- \$10,000 to Community Videotape Exchange, Milwaukee, from Cudahy Foundation, for video exchange project at public library.
- \$5,000 from General Mills to Advertising Council to further "selected" causes of major public interest.
- \$25,000 to Education Development Ctr., Newton, MA, to develop curriculum materials to accompany film for high school course on role of women in U.S. society, from Ford Foundation.

Note: since foundations usually delay reporting grants for up to several years, the grants listed may have been made as early as 1974. If you have recent grants you would like to report, write TeleVISIONS Survival Department, P.O. Box 21068, Washington, D.C., 20009.

Looking for money

Recent books on Funding Field:

The Art of Winning Foundation Grants, by Howard Hillman and Karin Abarbanel. (New York: Vanguard Press, 424 Madison Ave.) 192 pp. \$6.95.

The Art of Fund Raising, by Irving R. Warner. (New York: Harper & Row, 10 E. 53rd St.) 176 pp., \$7.95. Do or Die for Nonprofits, by James C. Lee. Published by Taft Products, Inc. 1000 Vermont Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20005. 102 pp.

Money goes under

The Point Foundation, which was set up to disburse money from the profits of *Whole Earth Catalogue* and its successor publications, informs us that sales on the books are way down, and that they no longer have funds. "We are in the throes of evaluating what we can do as an organization that's gotten used to its function of giving away money and now suddenly doesn't have any to give away," writes Point President Louis Durham, in a form letter that goes out to any fund request.

Feedback

Scrambler defeated



I enjoyed your article, "Video scrambler patented" in the August/September issue of TeleVISIONS. In response to your article, from our testing, any proc amp is sufficient circuitry to defeat the TAV Copy Guard. I believe TAV recognizes this, and does not imply full protection from piracy, only such unauthorized dupes as might be done by end users, such as small schools, media groups, and in the future, owners of the Sony Betamax, etc.

—Robert F. McDonnell

Media workers tortured in Chile

We are writing to inform you and your readership of the formation of the Emergency Committee to Defend Latin American Filmmakers. The Committee's purpose is to disseminate information on the repression of filmmakers in Latin America and mobilize broad support for their defense and survival.

Among the most recent victims of Chile's military junta are Carmen Bueno, a 25-year-old film actress, and Jorge Muller, a 27-year-old cameraman. Carmen studied film and drama at the School of Arts of the Catholic University of Santiago. She has worked as a production assistant on numerous films, including Patricio Guzman's feature documentary, *THE FIRST YEAR*, and has also produced children's programs for television. Carmen is most noted for her work as a film actress, including leading roles in the feature film *A LA SOMBRA DEL SOL* and Miguel Littin's award winning film, *THE PROMISED LAND*, now in distribution throughout the world.

Jorge Muller studied at the Film School of the University of Chile and has worked as an assistant cameraman and director of photography on many award winning Chilean and international productions including Patricio Guzman's *THE FIRST YEAR*, Saul Landau's *BRAZIL: A REPORT ON TORTURE* and QUE HACER, Paul Ruiz's *THE PENAL COLONY* and Miguel Littin's *THE PROMISED LAND*.

On November 29, 1974, at 9:00 in the morning at the corner of Billao and Los Leones Streets, Carmen and Jorge were forced into a car and abducted by agents of the infamous Direccion Nacional de Inteligencia (dina), an agency modelled after the Nazi Gestapo and the Brazilian and Uruguayan 'Death Squads'. Since then, very little information has been available as to their whereabouts or their physical condition and

their families and friends have been unable to contact them. Two former prisoners recently released from the Tres Alamos concentration camp near Santiago said they had seen Carmen there. One reported having seen Carmen, in very bad physical condition being carried by two men. Another testified that both Carmen and Jorge had been subjected to beatings and torture with electric and said that, in addition, "Carmen received special attention from the torturers of the SIFA (Servicio Inteligencia de la Fuerza Aerea) and DINA....for several weeks straight she was taken on a daily basis to long torture sessions where she was brutally raped. They would bring her back with her legs half paralyzed, and we would hear her screaming in pain day and night."

It is such complete disregard for the most basic of human rights by the Chilean junta—including its recent denial of entry to members of the United Nations Human Rights Commission—which has outraged people throughout the world. We are appealing to filmmakers, in particular, to rally now in support of Carmen and Jorge. Public pressure and massive letter writing campaigns have been responsible for saving lives. Please send letters or cables, requesting the immediate release of Carmen Bueno and Jorge Muller, as well as the cessation of the torture and imprisonment of all other political prisoners in Chile to the enclosed addresses. We would like to hear from all those who are interested in being informed of the continuing activities of the Committee and especially those who would like to support or contribute to the Committee's work.

Rebecca Schiffman, Secretary
Emergency Committee to Defend Latin American Filmmakers

Print resources

By Darrell Delamaide

Media and power



mediacracy:
American Parties and Politics in the Communications Age, by Kevin P. Phillips. (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday and Co., 1975, 246 pp., cloth, \$8.95)

Who Controls the Mass Media? Popular Myths and Economic Realities, by Martin H. Seiden. (New York: Basic Books Inc., 1974, 246 pp., cloth, \$8.95)

Here, unfortunately, are two more books cashing in on the mysterious link between media and power without addressing themselves to the subject. Both books have merits, but neither justifies its title.

The main failing of each book is that its governing idea doesn't govern. Phillips claims that post-industrial society (sic) has produced a liberal new knowledge elite to replace the conservative old establishment, and this development necessitates a massive political realignment (Phillips is generally referring to the U.S., but occasionally expands his comments to include the entire Western world.)

But Phillips fails to establish the existence of a knowledge elite, or its liberalizing influence. Despite a deluge of watered-down Daniel Bell and Walter Dcan Burnham (not to mention Herman Kahn—who can't really afford any watering-down), Phillips rests his assertion on sweeping generalizations and undocumented statistics. Moreover, he never clearly demonstrates the causal link between this sociological development, described in the first part of the book, with the detailed historical analysis of voting patterns that makes up the bulk of the book. Phillips, the reputed architect of Nixon's southern strategy and now a syndicated columnist writing political analysis, is on much surer footing with the voting patterns. While the analysis is truly diverting, a description of

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voting patterns—no matter how many maps accompany it—doesn't get at the heart of how media change political relationships.

Phillips nears the real subject, for instance, when he observes that long-running Congressmen have avoided bad effects from the swing of public opinion in presidential elections by using public relations techniques to establish an identity separate from the party. But, having noted this effect of communications on traditional party structure, he doesn't examine in depth how a projected personal image replaced party precinct organization—the only basis for beginning to forecast any trends in this shift of power.

Seiden makes some very telling arguments against the "myth" of media power, concluding that real power resides in ideas, while the media are just that, channels to convey these ideas. In the course of this demonstration, Seiden provides a wealth of statistical information—which, unlike Phillips, he meticulously documents. Like Phillips, though, he fails to reach any depth in his analysis. While there's truth to his claim that it is the knowledge communicated by media that gives power, he merely brings us to the old dilemma of separating the message from its medium—don't the new media really make possible new types and degrees of knowledge?

Neither Phillips nor Seiden will grapple with this dilemma, which holds the key to understanding the impact of new media on social relations.

With these books, however, we apparently have two authors seeking a vehicle to get further mileage out of data assembled for other purposes, disguising their well-worn jeeps with the flashy chrome of a deceptive title.

Grass roots TV

Video Power: Grass Roots Television by Chuck Anderson Praeger Publisher, N.Y. Available Oct. 1975.

This is a good survey of video and cable as used in the social process. Following a concise introduction that provides some good starting definitions of what video is about, the author travels through a good cross section of video projects around the country. The examples are all projects where video has been used to serve some socially relevant purpose, easing racial tension, increasing communications between citizens and government or in providing access to cable T.V. For the uninitiated, there is hardly a better place to start.

Following the sections on actual video utilization is an overview of what cable TV is and how to get your tapes on a system. Then, some suggestions about video training, system design and fund-raising. While none of these latter sections will tell you all you need to know about any of these things, they give the general idea. For putting the concepts into practice further reading will be necessary. Its weakness is the section on funding, which is somewhat over optimistic. There is a good brief on how to write a proposal, but anyone who has recently tried to hit foundations for video money, might tell you not to waste your time. The author does point out some other fundraising activities such as video taping events for others, but if you do, please charge more for an event than the \$50 the author suggests or we may all go broke.

In the back there are some lists of resources, periodicals, and films on video (no lists of video on video for some reasons). For teachers, librarians, other groups and individuals who want a quick briefing on what video is all about, this book is a good bet and quick reading. If you have been digging into video for a good while, you will not find much new.

—Ray Popkin

Architects plan media centers

Performance Guidelines for Planning Community Resource Centers. American Institute of Architects, Research Corporation, 1735 New York Ave. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006 Price \$7.50.

In July 1974 the AIA Research Corporation undertook a twelve month study of design considerations for the Community Resource Center (CRC) concept. The study was funded by the Library Research and Demonstration Program of the U.S. Office of Education. The CRC is what you might call an expanded library, a center that provides, media resources, meeting spaces, video labs, referral services and other attractions.

During the twelve months of study the research team conducted many on site interviews at locations where innovative concepts



"Mr. Nielsen? The Mr. Nielsen?"

were in practice and they also held many small and large groups brainstorming workshops. In these workshops a variety of ideas and considerations were bounced by a variety of experts in different fields both technical and social.

The result is a graphically illustrated 11x17, 100 page document that details physical and spacial requirements for various services. The format is aimed at generating ideas and considerations rather than specific rules and it is designed to be of interest to community groups, video groups, librarians and others as well as architects.

Software listed

The Video Bluebook: Programs and Resources for Business and Government [White Plains, NY: Knowledge Industries Press, \$24.50]

This new directory of video software lists 2500 titles relevant to business and industry as well as 2,000 of general interest. The directory also lists some 150 video program distributors and 500 other video service organizations, providing a recent and up-to-date survey of commercially produced media as well as some non-profit groups.

Information is power

A list of Bay Area Media Centers has been compiled by June Cochran and printed in the June, 1975 issue of the *Correspondent*, the publication of the Coro Foundation's Northern California Center for Public Affairs, 149 Ninth Street, SF 94103. The Foundation holds seminars and training in public affairs. While not entirely comprehensive, list includes 46 organizations.

World Film and TV Study Resources is a reference guide to major training centers and archives by Dr. Ernest D. Rose, Professor of Communications, Temple University, Philadelphia, Pa. It provides detailed information on 85 archives and 375 professional training programs in 76 countries. 421 pp. Cost: 29 German marks, not including shipping, from Verlag Neue Gesellschaft GmbH, D-53 Bonn-Bad Godesberg, Koerner Strasse 149, Federal Republic of Germany.

Counter-Spy is the excellent research publication of the Fifth Estate (P.O. Box 647, Ben Franklin Station, Washington, D.C. 20044), an organizing committee that exposes excesses of intelligence and repression activities at home and abroad. The spring/summer issue (it's a quarterly) includes "The Politics and Proliferation of Data Banks", an excellent examination of this invasion of our privacy. Other stories investigate various aspects of the security establishment. Cost: \$15, which includes sustaining membership in the Fifth Estate.

The University of Missouri's *Freedom of Information Center* issues periodic reports on first Amendment-related issues in print and broadcast media, as well as an excellent round-up called *FoI Digest* on a bi-monthly basis. Address: Box 858, Columbia, Mo. 65201. Reports are 35 cents.

Know Inc. (P.O. Box 86031, Pittsburgh, Pa. 15221) publishes a resource guide for feminists. They accept camera-ready art (limit is 1/4 of an 8 1/2 x 11" page) from people who have products, services or information of value to feminists.

Selecting A Cable System Operator. Cable Television Information Center, 2100 M Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20037. 1975, 74 pp., \$7.50. (Basic guidelines for local communities in selecting their franchise operator)

Public Media Center (2751 Hyde St., San Francisco, CA 94109) now offers a periodic newsletter for friends and supporters, telling of the progress of their work in public-interest advertising.

Benefits and Problems of Seven Exploratory Telemedicine Projects by John J. O'Neill, Joseph T. Nocerino, and Philip Walcott. MITRE Corporation, McLean, Va. 22101. 1975, 105 pp. (An assessment of seven DHEW funded two-way visual telecommunications projects.)

The Use of Financial Analysis in Decision-Making. Cable Television Information Center 2100 M Street, NW, Washington, DC 20037. 1975, 40 pp., \$3.50. (A basic guide to understanding cable economics)

Cable Television Manpower: Job Descriptions and Educational Requirements by Edward J. Roth. Department of Commerce, Office of Telecommunication, 1325 G Street, N.W. Washington, D.C. 20005 1973, 118 pp., (OTR 73-2) (Job descriptions of duties and responsibilities.)

The *Communications Library Catalog* of the University of Illinois (est. 46,800 cards) will be photographically reproduced and printed in book form by G.K. Hall and Co., 70 Lincoln St., Boston MA 02111. Price: \$240.

Voice is a four-page newsletter produced by Free Southern Theatre (1328 Dryades St., New Orleans, LA 70013) which includes details of the groups media projects, as well as other activities of the Third World theatre group. The troupe produced "Nation Time" for WYES-TV, the New Orleans PBS affiliate. The show was cancelled mid-season last year because of its radical content, according to FST.

CATV: Manpower by Joan McKenna. Quantum Communications, 2330 McKinley, Berkeley CA 94703. 1971, 19 pp. (Useful projections of work loads by category of function)

Jeffrey Bush and Peter Z. Grossman, "Videodance," in *Dance Scope*, Vol. 9, No. 2, Spring/Summer 1975, pp. 11-19.

Classified ads

EQUIPMENT FOR SALE
Sony EV-340 1" editing deck \$3600; 2 Sony ECM-50 lavalier microphones \$100 each; Tanberg 3300X 1/2 track audio recorder \$350; Shintron 366 switcher \$700; Shintron 312 gen-lock sync. generator, (RS-170)\$600; 2 Sony AVC-4600 cameras, 1" vidicon, CCU \$1700; Shure M67/M675 audio mixer (ACor batteries) \$250; BSR Metrotec equalizer \$35; Samson triod with cam-link head and dolly \$150; Conrac 19" monochrome monitor

For Sale By Video Works, Inc. 213-828-7820 Contact Peter Kirby, 24857 Walnut, Newhall, Ca. 91321

WANTED—VIDEO ARTIST in residence at San Jose (Cal.) public access ctr. We don't know how to work out money, but you would have access to 60,000 subscribers, with active channel and lots of people support. Call (408) 287-5727. Barry Verdi.

Equipment for sale, Contact Ron McCoy, 506 A Rarig Center, U. of Minn., University Community Video, Minneapolis, Minn. 55455.

Two.....Sony EV 320 F 1" Video Tape Editors, W/Flying erase, two audio tracks Selenoid controls, B&W, Color pack optional. Good clean edits, Purchased in wnt 74, \$1500 each.

Conferences

Oct. 2-8: *International Telecommunications Union*, Geneva Switzerland, including "Youth in Electronic Age."

Oct. 6: *Community Video Fall '75*, Washington Community Video Center, Inc. Series of seven workshops in various aspects and levels of video production and process. Details and brochure from Center. (202) 462-6700, 2414 18th, NW, Washington.

Oct. 7-9: *Video Expo*, Madison Square Garden, New York City. Major video equipment show. Also include video classes by Knowledge Industries and Smith-Mattlingly, Inc.

Oct. 7-9: *Video Cram Course '75*, Statler-Hilton Hotel, NYC. Video workshops. For details call (203) 322-2030. *Sony Video Workshops* held throughout the fall. In October workshops held in Rochester, N.Y. (with Seneca Communications), Los Angeles (with Hoffman Electronics), and Tulsa (with Systa-matics). For times and dates call local dealers or Jeff Glasser, Sony Corp., 700 W. Arteria Blvd, Compton, CA 90220.

Oct. 7-9: *Electronic Industries Association*, 51st annual convention, Fairmont Hotel, San Francisco.

Oct. 9-12: *Women in Communications* annual national meeting, Tulsa, Okla.

Oct. 10-14: *Bicentennial Conference on Gays and the Federal Government*, All Souls Church, 16th & Harvard, Washington, D.C. including Oct. 12 panel on "The FCC and Gays in the Media." Registration \$12 from: Bicentennial Conference, GAA/DC, Box 2554, Washington, D.C. 20013.

Oct. 13-18: *Audio-Visual Institute* Bloomington, Ind. For details call (812) 337-2853.

Oct. 15-19: *Art Transition*, Cambridge. (see Video Arts section).

Oct. 17: *FCC Northeast regional meeting* with public, 3:30 p.m. New England Life Insurance Hall, Copley Sq., Boston.

Oct. 17: *Midwest Seminar on Videotape and Film*, Chicago. Holiday Inn, O'Hare Airport. Demonstrations and presentations of A-V equipment. Sponsored by four local nonprofit groups.

Oct. 22-26: *New Horizons for Humanity*, Cape Canaveral FL. By Committee for the Future. (202) 966-8776.

Oct. 26-30: *Information Revolution*, Boston. American Society for Information Science, 1155 16th St, NW, Washington DC (202) 659-3644.

Oct. 27: *Workshop in Videotape Techniques* for government employees Deadline for applications due to Bureau to Training U.S. Civil Service Commission.

Oct. 31 - Nov. 7: *Fourth International Open Encounter on Video*, Buenos Aires, Argentina. Organized by Center of Art and Communication, 452 Viamonte St., B.A.

Nov. 2-4: *Action for Children's Television* conference on the arts. Atlanta Memorial Arts Ctr. Contact ACT: 46 Austin St, Newtonville, Mass 02160.

Sony Video Workshops in November in Oakland, CA (with General Electronics), Los Angeles (Hoffman), Milwaukee (Milwaukee Video), and Phoenix (Vidcom). See October above for details.

Nov. 7: *Chicago International Film Fest*, 12 E. Grand.

Nov. 12-15: *Sigma Delta Chi* professional journalism society. Ben Franklin Hotel, Philadelphia.

Nov. 16-19: *National Association of Educational Broadcasters* annual convention. Featuring TeleVISIONS workshops, as well as major hardware show, workshops, etc. Sheraton-Park Hotel, Washington, D.C.

Nov. 17-21: *Workshop in Video tape Techniques*, U.S. Civil Service Commission Bureau of Training. Eligible are federal, military and civilian training specialists. Write, Attn: T-OP, 1900 E St., NW, Washington 20415.

Nov. 18: *FCC regional meeting*, Brown Palace Hotel, Denver. Public meeting, 6:30.

Nov. 20-21: *FCC regional meeting*, with licensees 1:30 Nov. 21, Fairmont Hotel, San Francisco. No meeting with public. Instead a call in telecast 8 p.m. KTVU-TV, Nov. 20.

CABLE HANDBOOK

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Two.....1120, Concord VTR Color 1/2" editors, insert and assemble edits. approx. 2 yrs. old, good back up deck, \$750 each.

Three.....AV/AVC 3400 systems, Sony's portapak, metal camera and Vtr with 6:1 zoom lens, used in access two years, still some good mileage on these packs, \$600 each.

Two.....3130 Panasonic Color 1/2" editors, Insert and assemble edits with CTL Video only Mods, 1 year old, good edits, \$1200 each.

One.....12" trinitron Unimedia, w/Video and Audio connectors, \$400.

One.....AV/3600, Sony B&W Video tape Recorder, w/AGC, \$400.

We would like to sell this equipment soon, all are in working order, we can accept Checks or COD's. Can provide video tapes on items you are interested in.

Elizabethtown (Ky.) Communications Center reports a theft of equipment on Aug. 22, including a Panasonic TC 3130, Pan. NV 3080 (Serial # KS Ha1111), camera WV3082, and AC adaptor NV B40, Sony Electret Condenser Mic ECM-19B, Sony BP 30, Telex headset, and camera cable. The identified thief is 5'6", 165". If you are approached about buying such equipment, contact the Center at (502) 765-7767. They offer \$100 reward.

If this is your first issue, don't make it your last!

Chances are good that you are reading **TeleVISIONS Magazine** for the first time, since we sent out 15,000 copies of this special edition free to members of AEET, NAEB and other media users. If you're interested in the future of media in our society, **you can't afford to miss a single issue of TeleVISIONS**, the most exciting and fastest-growing publication in the field. Under one cover you will find provocative and authoritative features as well as a forum for news and opinion from all segments of the media public-including **you**. Not to mention our regular "News from the Videosphere," listings, reviews, and much more. **Don't wait. Send in your check today: a bargain at \$10 for individuals or \$15 for institutions.** (Check must accompany individual subscriptions.)

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